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ADULT BOOK READING IN THE UNITED STATES, A PRELIMINARY REPORT.

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THE FINDINGS OF A PILOT STUDY OF THE PERSONAL USE OF BOOKS BY ADULTS IN THE UNITED STATES AND OF THE FACTORS WHICH INFLUENCE THEIR READING ARE PRESENTED. CHAPTER I, "READING--A PERSONAL VIEW," PRESENTS EXCERPTS OF INTERVIEWS WITH BUSINESSMEN, HOUSEWIVES, AND STUDENTS OF THE CHICAGO AREA WHO WERE CHOSEN AT RANDOM AND WHO WERE WILLING TO SPEND SEVERAL HOURS TALKING ABOUT THE INFLUENCE OF BOOKS IN THEIR LIVES. CHAPTER II, "PATTERNS OF READING--QUANTITATIVE," ILLUSTRATES AND ANALYZES THE VARIOUS COMBINATIONS OF EXPERIENCES IN CHILDHOOD AND ADULT LIFE WHICH EITHER DRAW PEOPLE TO BOOK READING OR PREVENT THEM FROM BECOMING BOOK READERS. THE AMOUNT OF READING, SOURCES OF BOOKS, EDUCATION AND INCOME DIFFERENCES, AND TYPES OF READING PREFERRED ARE A FEW OF THE MANY READING INFLUENCES DISCUSSED. CHAPTER III, "THE AVAILABILITY OF BOOKS," DOCUMENTS THE VARIATION AMONG COMMUNITIES IN BOOK AVAILABILITY AND CONSIDERS THE PROBLEMS OF ASSEMBLING AND INTERPRETING THE DATA REQUIRED FOR SUCH DOCUMENTATION. THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ARE DISCUSSED--(1) WHAT ARE THE COMPONENTS OF THE BOOK AVAILABILITY CONCEPT, (2) HOW DO COMMUNITIES VARY IN BOOK AVAILABILITY, (3) WHAT DIFFERENCES IN BOOK READING RESULT FROM THESE VARIATIONS, AND (4) WHAT ACCOUNTS FOR THE DIFFERENCES IN SUPPLIES OF BOOKS IN VARIOUS COMMUNITIES. EXAMPLES OF QUESTIONNAIRE WORDINGS USED, TABLES SHOWING BOOK AVAILABILITY, A GRAPH ILLUSTRATING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BOOK AND STATIONERY STORE SALES AND BOOKSTORE SALES, AND A LIST OF THE CITIES INVOLVED IN THE NATIONAL OPINION RESEARCH CENTER'S 1946 LIBRARY STUDY ARE APPENDED. (RH)

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ADULT BOOK READING IN THE UNITED STATES

A Preliminary Report

by

Philip H. Ennis

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INTRODUCTION

This pilot study on adult reading in the United States today documents, almost more abundantly than necessary, the personal relevance of books and book reading to ordinary Americans. It shows that this connection between books and everyday life is amenable to study through personal interviews. The study also indicates that quantitative survey techniques and previously gathered routine statistics of the book industry can provide the raw material for an objective assessment of what creates and maintains an adult audience for books.

In the course of satisfying ourselves that the above assertions were plausible enough to proceed with, many more questions, some of which were hardly even formed when we began, have taken shape to modify the original proposal. These modifications, in addition to the initial plans that have withstood the six-month scrutiny, are presented in the proposal that accompanies this report.

The report itself is in three chapters. The first presents the material gathered from the intensive tape-recorded interviews. The second compresses a variety of survey data taken from previous and new surveys into observations parallel and in counterpart to the qualitative matter in the first chapter.

The third chapter documents the variation among communities in book availability and discusses the problems of assembling and interpreting the data required for such documentation and their implications. A series of appendices documents these chapters.

CHAPTER 1

READING: A PERSONAL VIEW

In 1942 Ruth Strang emphasized in Explorations in Reading Patterns the "complexity and uniqueness" of individual reading habits. She also wrote that people "read with their experience and their emotions" and that each person has a "central core or radix" which more or less determines his reading. Further, she reported that reading skills and interests were intimately related, but in a complex way. Some twenty years later, we can report almost no major disagreement with her generalizations, but they fail to render full justice to the role that reading plays in the life of the ordinary book reader. For yesterday's complexities are by now either simplified or irrelevant.

In this chapter we present a glimpse into these lives, to see how books are found and used. The raw material is drawn from eighteen depth interviews and "bibliomemoirs," supplemented by a random storehouse of anecdotes supplied by the investigators' friends and acquaintances, whose urge to confess their reading sins was neither avoidable nor codifiable.

This small-scale qualitative part of the study was undertaken for several reasons. First there were many methodological problems of interviewing people about their reading that needed intensive exploration. Equally important was our stubstantive interest in the ways books fit into peoples' lives. Outside of the systematic studies of biographies, diaries, autobiographies, and other case material (a source of information we hope to explore in the larger study), there seemed no other way than the personal interview, during which we would try to penetrate as deeply into the person's private life as possible and at the same time cover the ordinary and all too quickly forgotten aspects of their lives--present and past--that involved books.

The respondents are mainly adults living in Chicago and its suburbs, but a few students are included as well. They were picked helter-skelter, depending upon the ease of finding them and their willingness to spend two or three hours talking about their lives and their books. They were divided almost equally by sex, were far better educated than the average person (three respondents had not finished high school, three more had gone as far as high school, and the rest ranged from a few with some college training to a couple with advanced professional or academic degrees) The women are mainly housewives; a few are in school, and one is a working career girl The men's occupations include construction supervisor and research chemist, salesman and lawyer.

Two-thirds of the sample can be considered "regular readers"; that is, they learned to read early in life (some before school, some during the normal sequence of first and second grade). They recall enjoying reading and being read to as children (this varied of course in degree), and they have continued as adults to include book reading as part of their style of life, notwithstanding some interruptions of one kind or another for limited periods of time. The diversity of subject matter, interests, and other aspects of reading among these regular readers is extensive, as might be imagined.

The other six or eight individuals show some interesting departures from this relatively unperturbed development of reading. A few are "deserters" (that is, as young people they appeared to have begun the process of developing skill and motivation to read, but then something went wrong, and they have moved away from books to some extent). A few are "late starters" (that is, they did not read a great deal during their early years, but have become much more active book readers later in life). Finally, there are one or two cases in which we thought we were going to be dealing with a nonreader (that is, a person who never did read and does not read now) only to find a much more complex book history.

The interviews themselves were based on an extensive guide which the interviewer used to keep tract of the major issues and particular points that needed to be covered. In most of the cases, however, the questioning took its own direction, emphasizing some areas more than others. We have, therefore, relatively few responses to standardized items. Nevertheless, most of the respondents in one way or another covered most of the things we were interested in exploring.

The rest of the chapter is divided into two parts. In the first part we present in summary form our main conclusions, illuminated by relevant, although fragmentary, quotations from the interviews. In the second part we present in condensed form a few of the interviews, in order to demonstrate the interview process at work and to see more holistically the way in which books are a part of people's lives.

Conclusions and Problems: Methodological

In no particular order, we discuss the qualitative interviews with an eye to the limits of what we can learn from this technique and the difficulties and opportunities of translating the leisurely, unstructured depth interview into the formal, quantified questionnaire. The quotations are identified by the code name of the respondent and a cryptic note as to age, sex, education, and occupation.

1. Our respondents can and did talk freely and extensively about themselves and their book reading, present and past. In almost all cases we established good rapport, and in some cases very personal and intimate matters were revealed and openly discussed. It would appear that books are a neutral screen, behind which the respondent can speak about himself quite personally and still maintain the distance he feels necessary for his defense. In some cases these personal matters bore directly on books. One of these will be presented in detail later. In other cases we secured valuable information about books and reading but did not succeed in penetrating the barriers which the respondent had set up around important, and often closely book-related, areas of his life. In these cases our conclusions are more objective and inferential rather than directly confessional.

The question is whether or not the extent of cooperation we secured was a total function of the voluntary and thus highly self-selective nature of the sample. Our problem is to transform some of these personal areas into questions carefully enough designed that the ordinary respondent will answer them. Both on the general grounds of the survey technique's ability to do this, and on the basis of our own pilot surveys on books and reading (to be discussed in Chapter 2), we feel optimistic on this score.

2. The respondents had no difficulty in identifying themselves as readers or nonreaders. They could do this for major segments of their lives, usually identified by their school histories (that is, they could tell if they read a good deal in elementary school, high school, and college, comparing each period with the other). There was a tendency for them to describe themselves at the times when they were not reading more in terms of "not reading very much" or "reading very little," rather than being "nonreaders." It appears that the value of reading is high enough to make it uncomfortably derogatory to label oneself a nonreader.

Though it may have been due to the setting of the interview situation (which emphasized books), it seemed that the term "reader" was almost synonymous with "book reader." There will be some evidence presented later that this is probably not so with the general public.

The respondents also showed this clear unambiguity in designating their parents as being readers or nonreaders and their parental home as having a book-rich or a book-poor atmosphere. The internal evidence we could piece together from the interviews satisfied us that these recollections were probably as accurate as the estimates of the book atmosphere of their current home. Since the latter was visible to the interviewer, and indeed matched the respondent's description in most cases, we feel secure that early parental recollections of books and reading are not subject to wide distortions.

There was also substantial accuracy, we felt, in the respondent's estimates of reading by spouse, children, and friends. There were, however, some interesting discrepancies.

Carolyn Fainer is about thirty-four years old, active, voluble, and cheerful, wife of a psychiatrist and mother of four young children. During her interview she commented frequently on how "insignificant" her own reading was compared to her husband's. For example:

> He only buys significant books. All the significant books on the shelf are his, and the insignificant books are mine. Why is that? Because he likes significant things, and I like insignificant things. I don't know.

Yet, personal knowledge of the husband's reading suggests that there is a great deal of overlap between his reading and his wife's.

Mrs. Cane, a sprightly mother of three, teacher-in-training, and wife of a professional chemist, lives in the same suburb as Mrs. Kruger (another respondent) and is a good friend of hers. Her husband, in part, introduced her to the habit of reading, after their marriage, and she sees him as a lifetime book addict:

> We started reading. He had always read. When you see someone else enjoying it so much, you just sort of figure you're missing the boat when you don't.

Looking back on his own life, in a later interview, however, her husband did not recall reading a great deal as a child or as a student. Once again, we may be dealing with the problem of contrasting definitions of the meaning of the term "reader." Much more of this later.

3. As we began to inquire into amount and type of reading, it seemed clear that some people thought in terms of the number of books they read, and others initially responded in terms of the amount of time spent. Hardly anyone spontaneously evaluated books in terms of money spent, and we concluded that estimates of how much they spent on books over the year were more inaccurate than were estimates of how many books they had in the home. This does not mean that the respondents do not think about money with respect to books; they are quite aware of it, and in some cases books as costly property, or as luxury items, are important barriers to reading.

Julia Kruger is a thirty-seven-year-old suburban housewife and mother of five children. She buys few books because of the guilty feelings such purchases engender. Her husband and her husband's family have constantly told her that money spent on books is money wasted. Her reading history will be described in much greater detail below.

We conclude that asking about the number of books read, the amount of time spent reading, and the number of books in the home are the most accurate ways of assessing the quantitative aspects of book reading, though we do not ignore the possibilities of getting estimates of how much money the family spends on books (and who does the spending).

4. Accurate estimates of the respondents' amount of reading were achieved piecemeal through the initial reconstruction of the typical week's and typical month's reading and then the adding of these units across the year, making sure that the very frequently reported seasonal differences in reading did not throw us off. Often the respondent would be surprised at the final calculation of how much he read. With some care, then, people can be led into fairly accurate quantitative assessments of how much they read, and it is likely that the structured interview can be used effectively to duplicate our informal results.

Magazines are different. They are, by and large, not read like books, and thus keeping track of their quantitative aspects is somewhat different. People could recall the names of the magazines they regularly read or look at (and whether they are subscribed to or seen outside the home), but had difficulty expressing how much they read them in terms of hours of the day.

Mrs. Gordon is a still-attractive matron somewhere in her forties, wife of a lawyer and mother of two teenage daughters and a young son. She is inclined to be reflective and retiring, but there is a kind of sharp brightness about her. When questioned about the extent of her magazine reading, she explained:

> A magazine is something you pick up and put down while you're waiting for something to boil. Sometimes, if I'm tired, I'll sit down and read a magazine from start to finish. Other times I'll pick it up, just thumb through and look at fashions and recipes. I have them around, pick them up and put them down.

5. With respect to the recall of specific titles of books read, however, the situation is quite different. Within the few minutes we gave the respondents to answer, most could provide substantially all the books read or looked at the previous week. Then, within the same time that we allowed them to answer the first question, they could also come up with some titles of books they recalled reading recently. It became clear during the course of the interviews, however, that there was a wide range of calendar time contained in the notion of "recently" and that, more important, there was considerable forgetting of the titles of books read (and some embarrassment at this forgetfulness, it should be noted). Some interviews were characterized by the continual interspersed mention of books recently read, recalled by the accidental associations of the ongoing interview. Among certain types of readers this tendency to forget titles is standard. It is especially true of mystery story readers,[1] but for most readers, regardless of the type of material, this occurs to some extent. It is not clear whether the forgotten titles were less liked, less important to the person, more poorly written, less talked about by friends, or simply read longer ago. This is an open question.

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[1] One group of mystery story fanatics who relied on a rental library used a set of code initials in the back of the books to keep track of which they had and had not read. Neither the title, author, cover, or first page was sufficient clue to alert memory. For other readers there is a certain comfort in rereading the same ones twice. More of this below.

Once a title was recalled, however, the respondent had surprisingly little difficulty in reconstructing how he had heard of the book, from whence he had gotten it, and where it fit into his way of thinking and feeling.

The major methodological implication of these results is to reinforce a procedure we used for quite different reasons. It was to present or to read lists of books to the respondents and ask if they had read them, heard of them, and so forth. The lists were most often current best sellers, but on a few occasions were selections from lists of the most important books of Western Man and the like. The purpose of the lists was to gain some indication of the "cultural level" or awareness of current literature on the part of the respondent, but often they served to jolt his memory as well. The problem in using such lists is that the situation begins to look threateningly like a cultural achievement test, with the all too understandable invitation to inflate previous reading. Within limits, however, this technique stems quite promising.

6. The problems of recalling early reading experiences are even more problematical. People do not have a one-rail time track; various periods in their lives are mixed up with memories from other times and places. When we try to pinpoint, for example, the transition from children's to adult books, there appears to be considerable difficulty in identifying when the first adult book was read; but there is more ease in mentioning the titles of adult books they recall reading far back in their childhood (or whenever the time was). In short, it would be a misdirected sense of measurement to attempt a person's chronological reading history. An invitation to recall the memorable books in his life is both more realistic and perhaps just as useful. In most cases, when this question was asked (usually well along in the interview), the results were extremely rewarding.

Mrs. Kruger recalled Paul Blanchard's Catholicism, Communism, and Democracy as the spark that ignited her desire to transfer her children from their Calvinist parochial school to a public school.

> The first book I read that really changed my thinking on this was written by Paul Blanchard. I read that, I guess, fifteen years ago, so really my [pause] it all started then already [pause] my objection to the Christian school, as a result of reading that book.

Mildred Connors, a college-educated medical research assistant, wife of a chemist, and mother of five sons, is a pleasant Negro women in her late thirties, living on Chicago's west side. Her response to the question was, perhaps, the most illuminating portion of her interview.

> I think books concerning Negroes that I started to read in the last few years of high school and early college years [were most important to me] because those books, you just didn't have around the house, and there was nobody talking about them being in the library, and they didn't teach them to you in school, and it was a source of amazement to me to find out all these things. I think that these books have played a great part in helping my thinking. I read one about seven years ago that [pause] I don't know what you would say it would be, because it was a children's book. The title of it was Amos Fortune. He was a Negro who came over as a slave--I think he was really more like an indentured servant--and it was about somebody who really lived and attained his freedom. Of course, you know, we were taught about Booker T. Washington and Frederick Douglas, but I mean, they just didn't seem so real, you know, as some of the people I found out about later who fought in the Revolutionary War and led uprisings--you know, people who really did the things that anybody else would do under the same circumstances. It's sort of seeing different. Before that you didn't think in terms of yourself as being a Negro, you know, really Negro. You were just somebody else. Amos Fortune told of how he came here. It told of the things he went through on the boat, how he felt and how he thought. He worked for someone who wasn't just a kind person, but he was a fair person, and he knew that after he'd worked a certain length of time and made a certain amount of money and learned a trade, that he would be free. And so he was, and then he married, but then he had community problems. He wasn't accepted. But he still worked, and he made a living for his wife. It was just an ordinary life, and how he lived and managed and all. And he was a real person. I knew there was supposed to be people like that at that time, but it was very difficult for me to think in terms of Negroes being anything except slaves. I knew it was factual that there were supposed to have been landowners, Negroes who owned slaves, and all that kind of business, but [pause] I don't know. It just did something for me. It started me to thinking, helping me to think in certain areas. It even helped to bring about some real understanding. Now we used to have in Kentucky, in school we used to have Negro history week like they have here, but after the Negro history week was over, you know, there just wasn't any more, you know. It was almost like studying about somebody else and not about my own people. It could very well have been because there weren't books available to give you more understanding, and I didn't even know that books were available until I went to college, and I started to find out about some of these books. About people outside of some of these standard ones they tell you about--like Frederick

> Douglas, and Booker T. Washington, and Marion Anderson. It helps to find out that you really have some people, and they lived someplace, and they came from someplace, and they did things like other people, and you just didn't start from right here.

7. Once a two-to-three-hour interview has been tape recorded the process of condensation and interpretation necessary for its use in analysis has just begun. We have experimented with several ways of facilitating this task of compression and have concluded that the senior research staff and those at the research assistant level have to grapple with the tape itself, listening and relistening, recording by typewriter, piece by piece, the relevant parts of the tape. It is too expensive and time consuming to have the entire interview transcribed by a typist. The level of accuracy is too low and redundancy too high. Moreover, the research staff loses a valuable learning experience if they do not go over their own ground carefully. They will not hear their interviewing failures as well, nor will they generate ideas for the analysis as well. Finally, the fifty-to-ninety-page interview transcription is also too cumbersome an instrument to reveal very much. It takes the edited and shaped selective process to make a qualitative interview carry its burden of illustration and illumination.

Conclusions and Problems: Substantive

1. The diversity of books read by our respondents is surprisingly great. The Strang conclusion of 1942 that "a central core or radix" determines the person's reading is too constricting a formulation to express the range and variety of their reading. The infinite variety of human needs and interests is almost as great as the variety of books, and given the protean nature of the latter, the reading patterns of respondents spanned a good deal of the range of their life interests.

Two clarifications need to be made at once. First, most of the respondents either volunteered or were led to acknowledge that there were certain types of books they read rarely if at all. Second, the diversity of reading interests should not be construed as a cacophony of books, for almost without exception we were able to see how a person came to read a particular book. In most cases, in fact, the person's reading had immediate and obvious relevance to his life, even in those instances where the subject matter of the book was not the main reason for reading it. Surprisingly, however, while we could see how the books fit into the person's life we were impressed how little restriction there was of the books into a single quality level. With few exceptions our respondents' reading spanned the "brow" level, from high to low, across all types of books (mysteries, novels, history, current affairs, etc.) and within the particular types they read most. The widely recognized pattern of permeable boundaries between cultural levels is clearly observed in our interviews.

The rest of the substantive findings can be seen as exemplifications of these two clarifications. On the one hand, books are thrust at people from all sides and are only partially resisted. The question that faces us now involves the forces that bring books to the person and how books are selectively accepted or rejected. On the other hand, the person has ideas, needs, and beliefs which are either buffeted by opposition and indifference or sustained by affirmation and support. A reader has to scan the book horizon to find his friends and avoid his enemies. We have thus far only identified this as a central set of problems for analysis. Our answers are but clues and hunches. "For example," says the Yiddish wisdom, "is not proof."

2. People read about what they want to believe and tend to select books that are in some way familiar. We found hardly anyone who did not prescreen his reading; hardly anyone reported that he "really got mad at a book." Here are some of the few instances where a book was read but rejected, or as is more often the case; not finished. Mrs. Kruger, for example, was given a copy of Irving Wallace's The Man.

> It's interesting. I enjoyed it. I enjoyed what I read. But I never finished it. I always finish the books I pick out, but someone else's books--if they don't interest me I don't read them. I think this is a waste of time if it's something I don't want to read, and I don't have that much time to waste. I'd rather read something I want to read.... I guess I'm a picky reader.... If books don't appeal to me I just won't read them. Unless I have absolutely nothing to read I won't read them.

James Mahoney is a white construction supervisor in his late forties, married and the father of two. He is inclined to be outgoing and lively. His major adult commitment is to the community, and he is currently the leader of a liberally oriented homeowners' association in an area of racial transition. He described his reaction to books that he disagreed with:

> Well, I censor the book in my own mind. If I don't agree with it I don't agree with it. [He recalled a book on open occupancy given to him by] a conservative member of some organization, trying to sway my opinion, of course. I read it; you have to know the arguments of the opposition. In my mind I tore it apart because it just didn't jibe with my philosophy.

Gladys Kane had reacted especially strongly to The Feminine Mystique.

> That book makes my blood boil. I would like to talk to her sometime. I think she's kind of [pause] I don't agree with her particularly. She feels there's more to life than keeping a house and taking care of a husband and children. To be really satisfied you have to do something else besides, something that would make you feel like a "fulfilled person." I didn't feel that she met the problem fairly. She tried to pick up a whole bunch of women and then jell it all down into one little problem and one, two, three, four, five little solutions, which you can't do when you're dealing with reality. People are all different. She probably made a lot of people who are perfectly satisfied being at home twenty-four hours a day feel like they really aren't quite normal because they don't have the urge to get out and do something else. She made me feel this way because I get out and do something else anyway, but not for the reason she said. College actually will educate you whether for a particular job or just in general. If you're so dependent on a job to keep your mind going, then college really didn't do much for you.

Mrs. Kane also had a strong reaction to Frannie and Zooey:

> I thought it was disgusting. This kind of books leave me cold. I don't even think I finished it. I probably got half way in and thought this isn't getting any better and there's not much point [pause] and yet I have so many friends whose judgments I really respect as far as books are concerned that felt the Catcher in the Rye was just one of the best books they're read. But after reading Franny and Zooey I don't even want to read the other one.... If it's a book that I don't like because it's heavy reading and it isn't just in the particular field that I like, sometimes I just make myself read it. But then there are other books that I just sort of think are disgusting and not worth your time to even think about--that's like Franny and Zooey--and then I quit. There are too many good books to read without spending time on those. But if it's just because I'm mentally lazy, then very often I just make myself read--good discipline or something like that. [Exactly what did you dislike about Franny and Zooey?] Well, really not much of anything. It didn't appeal to my way of thinking at all. I hope this isn't a realistic portrayal of what people are like. I just thought it was sort of low and not worth the time. As I say, I read part of it and thought "Ugh!" [It was the interviewer's impression that there was a deep hostility to some portion of the book, but the interviewee refused to be drawn out further, except to say that the characters were wishy-washy and not motivated by high ideals.]

On the positive side, practically without exception there was some understandable reason why a particular book was read, a reason fitting into the personal life of the respondent in some quite visible way.

3. People reject or block out vast areas of books on hardly any more visible and rational basis than the inertia of habit or the constant appearance of new titles among categories of books they do read. Thus, on grounds that resisted intensive probing, respondents would simply say that they do not read novels, poetry, science fiction, or whatever. One respondent, for example, said:

> I'm not interested in fiction at all. I don't know why. It just can't sustain my interest at all.

This bring us to the problem of how people thread their way from one book to the next. The diversity of this process was considerable, but a few definite patterns stand out. Some people live in such a book-rich atmosphere that the ordinary talk among friends and lending of books comprises the major source of new books. This is too simple and incomplete a description, for these informal groups of friends can be tied into different strata and sectors of the literary world. Some are tied into current literature and belles lettres; others might specialize in law, medicine or political affairs. Some of the members in each of these circles are reading the book news and reviews in everything from the New York Times Book Review and the New York Review of Books to the specialty journals in their field, initiating thereby the word about new titles.

Carolyn Fainer depended almost entirely upon social contacts for suggestions of new titles and knowledge of books. A few quotes, culled from various parts of her interview, suggest how pervasive this pattern is in her literary life:

> **Charles is a friend of ours and just happened to say, "I'm reading Candy." And I said I'd never heard of Candy, and he said that it was the dirtiest book on the market: "You've got to read Candy!" [and so she read it].**
> **[Why did you read Gifts from the Sea?] Because for years people have said, with that kind of beautiful look on their face that one gets when one mentions Anne Morrow Lindbergh's Gifts from the Sea, "You should read her book. It is a beautiful and it's [pause.] You You need an answer to the mystery of life and how to live. The good life has done things for you. Read her!"**
> **I was at the beach one morning getting ready to go on vacation and I said to another girl that I was looking for some good reading to take to the Dunes. Can you suggest something? And she suggested The Slave.**

> I was riding in a car somewhere with some people, and a girl who has recently gone back to school to get her teaching certificate mentioned it, and the way she described it, it kind of struck my fancy.
> I can only remember reading one book as a result of reading a review of it.

Stanley Arnold is in his late fifties. He is married and has two teenage sons. In many respects he is a self-made man, for he has worked since his early teens, receiving his education from high school through a master's degree in night school. He has been an employee of a large Chicago industry for over forty years, and he is currently director of its public relations office. His reading is widespread and purposive. Unlike Carolyn Fainer, Mr. Arnold is inclined to reject social contacts as a worthwhile source of books:

> [Do you read books because people recommend them to you?] Not once out of a hundred. Very, very seldom. Someone will say you ought to read this book, and because I want to be agreeable I say it sounds interesting, but I don't pick it up as a rule, because it's usually a best seller.

Another quotation reveals his opinion of best sellers:

> Very few people use the library, and when they use it they don't know how to use it; and they're afraid to use it. They're afraid they're going to display their ignorance. Otherwise there is no reason in the world why the main emphasis should be on best sellers, and this is largely what people are interested in. I couldn't care less about best sellers. I very seldom read a best seller.

Other readers, being more isolated, use each book to lead to the next, either by virtue of the author, or by subject. The more isolated readers also tend to often pick up and read any title they hear mentioned or to use some systematic listing (for example, the little paperback Good Reading was mentioned by two or three respondents who were relatively more isolated than the others).

Mrs. Kruger, isolated as she is from literary society, is always aware of the books others are talking about and reading, although she shows no tandency to read a book just because she has heard about it.

> [How do you move from book to book?]

> Usually it's a reference, either in a book, or by someone, or in an article. I think my ears are always open when anyone talks about books. If I go into a strange home and they have books there, I think I'm more apt to wonder what the titles are than what kind of people are sitting in the chairs opposite me.

Mr. Arnold bases a great deal of his leisure time reading on the book Good Reading. He has copies at home and at his office and often gives copies to people he meets at work. He has been using the book for about twenty years. "The more people who could see this book and use this book, the more informed they would be."

Carolyn Fainer also recalled recurring attempts at systematic reading:

> I have a lot of habits that carry over from childhood that I'm somewhat embarrassed to talk about because they are really very much--carryovers from childhood. As a child, for instance, I would go down, you know, a list of "101 Best Classics," and I'd read the first ten. So there is something that carries over in my life, somehow, that has to do either with organization or the way a schoolteacher presents reading, or it might be the schoolteacher in me that carried over.

Finally, there seems to be a tendency among the more subject-oriented readers to scan the shelves at the public library in the sections that interest them at the moment and simply pick out the titles that sound appealing.

Among the books that Mr. Kane had read recently, for example, were several that he had located in that fashion:

> I was just back in that section and the name leaped out at me, out of the spine, and I saw it was part of the "Mainstream of America" series, and I had read several of the other books in this series, and I knew I would enjoy it.
>
> [What leads you to books?] I'd say it's either the area of interest or the author, or one is wandering through the fiction section and a particular title intrigues one.

There is one final comment about the linkage problem; it is a kind of fad and binge phenomenon. More than half of our respondents mentioned their addiction at one time or another to a particular author, type of book, or subject. This is perfectly logical; if some book finally breaks through the screens of self-selection and selective perception to be enjoyed, there is every reason that this experience will tend to be repeated. The extensive rereading of books (which we occasionally discovered) is an extreme example, but the principles of satiation usually preclude an immediate rereading, and the person looks for the closest variant of what pleased him. While this is certainly no news to the publishing world, which has been giving us series of books and "the newest novel by the author of that best selling ______" for years, it is interesting to see how powerful this phenomenon is.

Mr. Kane described both the mechanics and the pitfalls of this binge system in his reading life:

> You take a chance on an author, more or less, and find that you like him very well, and then you begin reading very many of his books, and sometimes this kind of leads one astray. I ran into this with an author who had written one nonfiction book on the west and also several novels. I was a little disappointed in the fiction work, compared to the nonfiction. If you do find an author you like than you read as extensively as [the library has his books].

The Kanes in general admit to being great binge readers: Mrs. Kane said at one point:

> We usually go on binges in this house. This year there's been a real effort to get everybody to enjoy the early American opening up of the frontier.... I can read only one or two of those books, and then I've had it. But my husband can read seven or eight of them and still look for more.
> We read several Kennedy books, and this winter was the winter we went on a little binge of Peter DeVries. And I read a couple of books of Tom Dooley.

Carolyn Feiner reported the operation of a similar and apparently repeating pattern in her reading life:

> [About how many books would you go through in the course of a winter?]
> That's hard to say. I might say four to six books, but that varies too; like I had a big Gide kick, so in a couple of weeks, you know, I read a number of books--I trailed around with them--so my reading, you know, might reach a new level. I'd never read any Gide. And I guess I was at a friend's house, and she had been reading the Counterfeiters, and [pause] I thought it was remarkable. I thought his overview of his people [pause] I think a kind of a remarkable gentleness in dealing with people who were essentially not gentle

> at all. But his view of them I thought in a way was Tolstoy-like. And from there it quickly spread from one to the other, and I just picked up as many as I could find. [From where?] From two other friends. I mentioned that I was reading that particular Gide book, and one came and brought me a couple, including Symphonie Pastorale in French. [Did you want to read all you could get?] No, I thought that at that particular time I had read as much as I wanted to read--that I was somewhat satiated at that point.... After that I got depressed.

There is a distinction, of course, between the binge or kick and a more long-term attachment. With some readers, like those above, the interest is fleeting, with others it may be a much more chronic attachment to a certain author or type of book.

Perhaps the best example of the latter reading pattern which we encountered was Mr. Arnold, whose long-term and systematic interest in certain authors forms an important sector of his reading:

> I'm very much interested in the work of Bernard Malamud. I have read everything he's written. Faulkner is [pause] I collect his first editions, and I have read all he's written. Sherwood Anderson [pause] I've been a fan of his for many years. I have, I believe, everything he published, first editions. Dylan Thomas is a very strong interest of mine and of my wife's. We traveled a few hundred miles to get into Wales last year to see where he lived and where he worked. I have everything that he published, and I have read it. We have recordings of Dylan Thomas, too, the poems he read.

An aspect of the kick or binge pattern, as indicated above, is the extensive rereading of books. Although most of the individuals we interviewed recalled doing this mainly in their childhood, a few have continued the practice.

Mr. Franklin is a busy, harried city planning official for a large, independent city near Chicago. He has a wife and two children, and is active in professional and community organizations. Much of his reading consists of mysteries and westerns:

> The major source [of these books] is my own vast collection down [in] the basement. I've saved these things. I find, you know, that if you let about three years go by they're all enough alike so it's like going out and getting a new one. I occasionally buy one if I see one by an author

> who I happen to like, but most of it is just rereading the stacks of them I have stored away in the basement.

But Franklin is perhaps not the most perfect example of the rereader, since he rereads books only after he has--more or less--forgotten them.

Other readers reread books because they felt they missed the point the first time around or because they could find even more of value in a second reading. Mrs Connors reread The House of The Seven Gables:

> Because the first time I read that book I just couldn't get it. I knew he was a good author. You know, if he wrote a book it was good. And there was something wrong somewhere. The next time I think I got it. And then I read it a third time.

And Mrs. Kruger rereads books for the same reason:

> Sometimes I have to read books twice, though, really to understand them and get what someone else does out of one reading. This was true of Mere Christianity. When I read that the first time I enjoyed it. But when I read it a second time [pause] and then I thought, what if I read it a third time and get still more out of it?

Carolyn Fainer had recently reread Crime and Punishment, a book that had impressed her very much:

> [How did you feel about rereading it?] At this moment I feel as if I could go read it again. You know [pause] gosh, there's a lot that escaped me. Again, I guess when I reread it I felt the same kind of excitement. When I reread The Brothers Karamazov my response to it was significantly different than the first time that I had read it. I think the first time I read it was during a fairly hectic or difficult period in my life. So in many ways it was as if I was reading it for the first time.

Whether or not a substantial number of readers reread books much as children do, for the comfort of association with old friends rather than as a search for depths that were missed on the first plumbing, remains to be seen. Such a pattern appears to be missing in the cases we have dealt with in depth in this preliminary study.

Much has to be done to identify the variety of ways books are chosen one after another. We are sure that these patterns exist and even coexist; but aside from the slender guesses we have, there is little systematic evidence that we can bring to bear to account for these patterns.

Sources

Sources of books.--Getting a book in hand involves, sometimes, just one step: for example, being in a library, seeing the book, and taking it out on the spot, knowing almost nothing about it except perhaps having heard of the author or being interested in the title (see Mrs. Kruger, below). More often there are two steps clearly discernible; first hearing about the book somewhere, in a review or an advertisement, from hearing a friend talking about it, or seeing the book somewhere, and then at a later time going to a bookstore or a library for the book. Sometimes there are three or more steps in the process, as when for instance, a person hears about a book, asks for it at a bookstore but is told the book is not available, then either sees it at a friend's house and borrows it, or is surprised to find that his wife has borrowed it from the library.

There is another dimension that we must take account of. It is the degree to which there is a purposive search for a particular book--going to the library or bookstore with a specific book in mind--or a purposive exposure to a particular channel--going to the library or bookstore "to get some books for next week"--or finally the accidental or near accidental exposure to a source of books--"I had to get something for my nephew's birthday, and so when I passed through the book department at Field's I thought I'd take a look."

There is no exact way, at this point, to describe the almost infinite numbers of sequences that finally connect reader to book. We will summarize the most outstanding and illustrate some of the more typical of these patterns. First, however, these generalizations seem to emerge from the interviews as a whole.

At any one time, and certainly over time, a person generally gets books from more than one place. Although he may use one more than another, there definitely appears to be familiarity and some contact with more than one source. Most of our respondents do in fact give the impression of finding out about books and getting them from one (or possibly two) places most of the time, but they also get books occasionally from a variety of other sources.

There does not appear to be any relation between the quality or diversity of a person's reading and where he gets his books, with perhaps these exceptions. One is that the less sophisticated reader (in terms of the kinds of amount of reading) seems to place more reliance upon the book club than the better educated and more sophisticated reader. We see this in comparing different readers and by getting retrospective reports from a particular reader about his past.

Second is the apparently obvious observation that the readers who are more fully surrounded by a book-reading set of friends are more likely to borrow books from their friends compared with those respondents who appeared to read by themselves. In Chapter 2, however, some statistical tables would appear to point to an opposite conclusion; clearly these qualitative hunches and quantitative estimates have to both be refined to resolve the puzzle. All these generalizations should be tempered with the most overriding one--concrete personal experiences with bookstores, libraries, bookclubs, and other sources are the ways in which people talk about their reading. We are left with the puzzle of assessing how much ideosyncratic contact as opposed to general availability of books accounts for the use and acceptance of various sources. Here, prior to the further empirical study of the problems, are a few patterns we discern.

People strangely disliked bookstores or were uncomfortable in them. Mahoney has even gone so far as to turn the library into a kind of bookstore:

> Often I borrow books from the library, and then I buy them, because I start marking up a book. I return books right away unless they are interesting to me. If they are interesting I mark them up so that when I reread I don't have to go through the extraneous matter. I have a number of library books here, with the bills in them or marked paid for. Rather than concerning myself with ordering the book from Kroch's and Brentano's I'll just go back and pay the fines and buy the book, indicating I lost it, or some other pretext.

The Kanes have evolved a system of their own in which the library also fulfills some of the functions of a bookstore, although they do not share Mahoney's dislike of bookstores. The librarian in the suburb in which they live apparently buys many books on their recommendation, so in effect the library is a part of their personal collection.

Other readers have, for one reason or another, developed an aversion to the local library. Carolyn Fainer, for example, became disillusioned with public libraries after moving from Pittsburgh to Chicago:

> It seems that when I got to Chicago there was a significant change. I used to get terribly irritated when I used to go to the Woodlawn Branch--when I was in Hyde Park--rather than the Blackstone branch. And I didn't even know the librarians couldn't find something [pause] they didn't know what I was talking about. I was always having bad days at the library. [The librarians] seem to be efficient or semi-efficient clerks, while I'm used to librarians who know something about books and authors.... The library frustrates me wildly.

The Social Nature of Reading

There has been so much print about reading as a private and personal experience, immune from public life, and paradoxically, about reading as the lubricating social fluid connecting the past with the present, the literary great with the average man, one reader with another--so many of these contradictory assertions--that it is with great hesitation we offer the evidence of our interviews. It is a disturbingly complex answer. Some people are solo readers, selecting their books from random sources, reading them alone, talking with no one regularly about them. Others live casually immersed in books, talk to everyone about their reading and themselves, move easily from the privacy of reading to friendly social intercourse about books. Yet, underlying even this flexible use of books is the distinction between public and private self. Books belong in both.

On reading Anne Morrow Lindbergh's *Gift from the Sea*, intended as a gift to her mother-in-law, but read before presentation, Carolyn Fainer admits, initially somewhat grudgingly, that:

> I thought it was quite nicely done, and she is a woman who has or who had, a quite full life, and I think she talked with the same kind of perspective that I think I would like to have in my life--the importance of being with people and the importance of being with herself, the importance of some order and routine in her life. [What does a book like that do for you?] It somewhat reinforces my own feelings. She talks about the different stages in her life when the children went along with her husband; at times she's been with her sister, and I guess I feel a great

> need personally for a certain amount of time by myself. I like people very much, but I find that they're also enervating, this is, takes something away from me as well as my getting something, but I felt I'm giving something worth more than I am getting. In a way I can get back something in the time when I spend by myself [pause] either with a book or I like to play the piano, so these are the ways I spend my times. And I think she was saying something of the same thing.

And the final paradox is the reader who with explicit discomfort confesses that he uses books to escape from people rather than face the engagements he himself wants. One such woman reported to us that one of her main worries was her tendency to substitute books for personal relationships, and that it was hard not to retreat into the world of books as a substitute for meeting and dealing with people.

Yet, this is the very same woman who has belonged to an informal book review club for some fourteen years, a club that has served as the focus of her close personal friendships and as an outlet for her intellectual and literary interests--interests alive since her early childhood.

Barriers to Reading

One of the guiding premises of this study has been that adult readers have either avoided or surmounted a variety of barriers that prevented others from becoming readers in the first place or discouraged them later in life. The obvious way to identify these barriers is to find out from nonreaders why they do not read. Since we had to interview readers, the alternative was to explore the times in our respondents' lives when they did not read at all or read less than usual. There were indeed such periods.

We have not yet classified in any satisfactory way the various times and conditions when reading was at a low point. Much needs to be done in this respect. Tentatively, we see a distinction among those barriers to reading that are of limited duration and those barriers which make extensive and relatively permanent inroads on the use of books. The ones we list below emerged in the interviews; their relation to the distinction between "chronic" and "acute" is complex: a particular barrier may be only a temporary block to one man but to another it may permanently shut off his use of books. We present the barriers, then, as we found them, with no effort to do more than describe their nature.

a) There are early difficulties in the acquisition of reading skills that either by themselves prevent the person from becoming a book reader, or in a more dynamic way feedback through the rewards of reading to lower the motivation to continue, which in turn prevents an increase in skill, which even further reduces the rewards, and so on. For some people these skill difficulties get straightened out in school. For others, however, the difficulty in reading has to be gotten over as an adult before reading can proceed into high gear.

b) Not surprisingly, we found a large number of changes in book use occurred at life cycle turning points. Marriage, childbirth, the early years of childrearing, and the departure of children from the home were for the women the ones most frequently mentioned. For both men and women the graduation from school, entering and leaving the work force, changing jobs, and retirement were also times when the amount and kind of book reading changed.

Also not surprisingly, we are not able from the interviews to conclude the net change in amount of reading, to say nothing of the kind of reading that takes place at these natural turning points. Even the obvious points become problematical. The decline of book reading after the completion of school, for example, is widely documented (see Chapter 2, p. 38). Yet according to these interviews, some people began their adult reading careers when they quit school. Or to take another example, the cookbook and baby-care book reader is obviously the young housewife. Yet cookbooks seem to be used by some women and not by others irrespective of life cycle, and baby-care books are used most with the first child and decreasingly with later children (this also appears to be true with respect to reading to children). In short, book reading, along with all sorts of other personal habits, is likely to be upset by the normal transitions of life, but the direction of that change is not too clear at this point.

c) Two related barriers to reading are the pressures from job and school (really a kind of job) to read books. We refer here not only to the real competition of time and energy between necessary reading and pleasure reading, though this competition is of great importance. We refer here to a complex of attitudes and habits related to serious reading that spill over into the realm of pleasure reading. Most of the time this invasion appears to depress "outside" reading, yet there was one instance where both professional reading and pleasure reading fluorished side by side and another where the two blended into each other, reading about work being done for the fun of it. The tensions between the job-required reading and that done on one's own is likely to be the source of much desertion from the ranks of the regular book reader.

One facet of this aspect of barriers to reading is exemplified by Mr. Franklin, who has been mentioned above in connection with his rereading of mysteries and westerns. George Franklin is a man who has essentially deserted books. A heavy reader through his childhood, his years in the army, and his years in college, he now reads only what is required by his profession (City planning), in addition to his mysteries and westerns.

> I've invested a hell of a lot of money in books that I ought to read and books that would be good reading, enjoyable reading, I think, except they're the kind of books you've got to give some thought to read, and I just don't get to it. I suppose that's what they trained into me at Northwestern in reading books that bear on a professional or technical field, a sense really of challenging the views of the author and trying to form your own judgment as you go through it as to whether this makes sense to you or whether this is the way you really think the world is or this problem works. With a western you don't have any of this. Just read it until you get sleepy and put it down and go to bed.

Which helped to explain his rather puzzled observation:

> I enjoy poetry more than westerns, yet I read the westerns more than poetry. It hadn't occurred to me before.

d) The last general barrier is the availability of books (we shall have more to say about this in Chap. 3). What has emerged from our interviews about this is more inferential than direct statement. It is hard for people to think how their reading is affected by the availability of books (just as the man born with a headache does not know what it really feels like). We learn a little from the respondents' comparing their reading when they lived in one place with that done in another, but this is so contaminated with other important differences in their lives that we hesitate to account for differences in reading by differences in availability. However, three points do emerge as areas to explore. First is the book richness of the home during the early years. Most of our respondents had some kind of strong association with books, mainly books in the home when they were young. How necessary this association is remains a central question, for most of these readers did have that contact. Second is the actual physical availability of books in bookstores, libraries, and other places where books may be reached. There are only the slightest clues to the significance of this factor, mainly from the accounting of pleasant personal experiences with good libraries (and their librarians) or with bookstores and their owners. Other methods beyond the individual interview are needed to assess the role of book availability.

Finally there is the more subtle, but still inferential aspect of availability which we feel has great significance. This is the book atmosphere, an admittedly ephemeral term, but like similar terms ("climate of opinion," "spirit of the times") it recurs as an important explanatory variable. In the interviews this sense of living in a book-rich and book-conscious circle of family and friends is quite clear. How far beyond one's immediate acquaintances this atmosphere prevails--whether, for example, whole communities can be classified as to their book atmosphere--is a question high on our agenda. For the moment we can only testify to the reality of this atmosphere on the microscopic level of personal networks of friends and acquaintances.

The Uses of Books

We have already indicated the ways books fit into people's lives. We assay here a more formal, but still preliminary identification, of the uses people make of books. Again it should be noted that a particular reader has at one time or at different times in his life read books for many reasons.

a) One of the most frequently mentioned ways people told us they used books was "to escape." Mrs. Gordon, for example, reported:

> I read one or two mystery stories a week, more when I'm tired and don't want to do anything, when I want something to divert me, when I want to escape. [What do you mean?] While you are reading a mystery it blocks everything else. You are concentrating on it, excluding other things, and when you're through with it you're through. Half the time I don't remember the name. With other books, if they are at all interesting or well written, you related them to your life in some way.

b) Almost as frequently heard was the use of books in the most pragmatic instrumental way. Mahoney said:

> I'm a great believer that if you have a problem or a project that you want to do then somebody wrote about it, and then let's start there, and at least benefit from somebody else's experience.

c) Related to the above is the almost ideal "intelligent layman," motivated by inner strengths, guided by internalized and clear standards, informed by knowledge of where the proper book can be found. This serene exploration of well-formed interests--generally about the larger world, ranging from their own communities to the boundaries of outer space--are once removed from a more personally involved use of books.

d) If the search for information, for cognitive order, is a frequent reason for the use of books, then the search for personal meaning, for some kind of map to the moral landscape, is also one. Later in this chapter we present a more extended picture of one such reader.

e) Related to the above is the use of books to reinforce or to celebrate beliefs already held, or, when shaken by events, to provide support in some personal crisis. The following is a quote from a bibliomemoir, written by a University of Chicago student

> During the last year at school I also read several religious books. The reason I chose these was due to a tragedy in my family. My mother was killed in an automobile accident just before Christmas, and so I turned to spiritual reading to help me through a difficult time. I read The Imitation of Christ by Thomas a Kempis, Peace of Soul by Fulton J. Sheen, and The Prophet. I also read a book about the second world was written by a Catholic chaplain called Look Out Below because I wanted to read about others' troubles and difficulties an and to prove to myself that my own were not as bad as I sometimes thought they were.

f) Another type of reading is that guided by one's job or community position; we need to explore in depth and across as wide a social landscape as possible the relation between professionally expected reading and free leisure reading--especially the conditions under which the line between work and play blurs and disappears.

g) We end this enumeration with a use of books cited as frequently (and often by the same people) as escape; keeping up with the book talk of friends and neighbors.

The interesting point here is that this kind of reading actually includes several different kinds of things. There is reading to keep ahead, to keep up, to voice and understand opinions that you have had some prior contact with; in fact, there is a whole rich area we have already alluded to--the social nature of reading.

Mrs. Gordon, who had been a member of a rather social book discussion group for several years, described some of the group's motivations for reading:

> For several people, at least, it is important for their social life to read the book that is currently popular so that they can discuss it. You know, everybody is talking about such and such a book, so we have to read it too! And a lot of them, including me, depend on the discussions of the book club to feel more at ease in talking about the book to other people.

We conclude this analytic section at this point. Other general and specific points could be made, but there has not been enough time to explore them concretely or to locate them satisfactorily in a theoretical way.

These are partial findings. More specific categories will emerge as we further explore the reading process. Lest this fragmentary way of presenting the depth interviews give the impression that there is not a rendering of the whole person, we cease the analysis here in order to present, in truncated form, one interview designed to indicate the totality we strove for. There are a number of errors in this interview, not counting those of grammar and syntax. We have noted these mistakes whereever we could, by the notation "[sic]." We leave to the reader the task of correcting the mistakes so indicated. Factual errors other than those indicated are ours. Nevertheless it is one of the most successful interviews we have conducted.[2]

The respondent is typical of the average suburban housewife in many respects, even in the kinds of difficulties and problems that she experiences. Her story is far from typical, however, both because of the dramatic conflict of values that she lives with (a conflict involving books, incidentally) and because of the clarity and power of her understanding. If proof be needed for the utility of the structured depth interview, this textbook case of perceptive interviewing and rapport provides it. A condensed and edited record of the two-and-one-half hour taped interview is given here. Later in the chapter additional aspects of her reading will be used where appropriate.

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[2] Research assistant Frederick Schlipf was the interviewer.

Mrs. V. is a pretty, gentle-mannered, thirty-seven-year-old mother of five children, ranging in age from sixteen down to four years. Her husband is a self-employed building materials salesman. She grew up in a strict Dutch Calvinist home on the west side of Chicago. She married soon after high school graduation and moved shortly thereafter to the suburb where she and her family now live.

She is a heavy book reader at present. As closely as we could reconstruct, she goes through approximately fifty books a year. Her reading, sandwiched into the day,

> starts at noon when I put my little four-year-old in front of "Bozo." Now this may be escapism for both of us, but I get in about an hour-and-a-half of reading while she is in front of TV and then again in the afternoon just before the children get home. I know that when they're home I can't, so I quick sneak in another half-hour or so. And then at night when I have them bedded down I start reading again, and I go real strong. I get maybe three hours in at night. My husband doesn't read so he watches TV while I read. We both go to bed about 11 or 11:30.... Ours is a mixed marriage; I read and my husband doesn't.[3]

Her main concerns are her children, their discipline and understanding, and a particularly difficult pending decision tied to the other major concern in her life--that of reconciling her growing dissatisfactions with the beliefs and practices of her church and her still strong religious convictions. The decision is whether or not to transfer her older sons from their Calvinist parochial school to the public school. Her current reading reflects these concerns. Among the books she has read recently are a college text on child psychology and one titled Your Growing Child and Religion.

> I saw it in the paperback rack in a bookstore, and the title interested me, so I took it home and read it. I haven't evaluated it yet, but this author encourages you to wait in teaching your child anything about religion until they are seven. I can see that it has merit because the years between zero and seven are, well [pause] otherwise they get a pseudo-piety. Sometimes you see this in kids, and I resent it. They

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[3] She reports that he objects to paying for library card fees and drummed into her head early in marriage that buying books is sinful.

> turn goodness on and off. If they decide maybe Jesus is listening, they are going to be real good, when actually underneath they are little dickens.

Another book she mentioned was Peace Shall Destroy Many, a description of the Mennonites.

> They said that this was a very bigoted and narrow-minded group of people about whom the author was writing. I so often liken them to the people in our church who I think are very narrow-minded and bigoted too. And that's why I read it. You see, we don't do anything on our Sabbath, so if our children see a man mowing the lawn on Sunday, this man is just not a Christian. I feel this kind of instruction is wrong. This man felt that their theology was sound, but that their traditions were bad. And this is the same thing that's wrong with our people. Traditionalism is always bad. The title refers to their not fighting, but it's a surface peace that these people have. Underneath they have the emotions we do, getting along, or not getting along with the neighbor.

Other books which she read recently were (1) Love and Conflict:

> I was browsing in the library, looking for a book on teenage boys. I had read a book about teenage boys, and I was looking for more. And I came across Love and Conflict, which was in the same area that deals with the family. I just thought it was something I should read because of the conflicts you have, with the ones you love mainly. So I took it home and after I read it, I wished I owned it, because it was that good. [Why did you pick this book?] Just the title. When you love there's always conflict with it. It isn't always love; it's sometimes hate that you feel, but you always feel some emotion. And this makes a conflict within you, you know, and that's why I picked it up. That's all.

(2) The Scarlet Letter, picked up because the school principal mentioned it during a conference about the rebelliousness of her oldest son. He was shocked at the boy's reading all the James Bond books and

> suggested [his] reading The Scarlet Letter if he really wants to get into some of the seaminess of life and yet have a moral tone to it. I happened to have a copy of it. That's why I read it. Sunday. I thought for today it's quite a toned-down book, but I imagine a hundred years ago when it was put out there was quite a bit of [pause]. [How did you feel about it?] Well, sympathy for the woman, first, but pride in her later. I hated her husband for putting her through what he did. The man with whom she

> committed adultery I felt sorry for; yet, I thought he was kind of jelly-backed, you know, that he wouldn't stand up to, own up to, the care of the child [pause] until he knew he was going to die, and then he did. I don't think it's anything like our society today, do you? Unless it's a bigoted group [pause] and even there, thinking of my own church now, if a woman has a child now out of adultery [pause] it's accepted today.

Her reading also includes current novels for example, she mentioned The Carpetbaggers, The Man, Catch 22, and Another Country.

> I was glad I wasn't of that country. You kind of more or less realize why the moral law was written. And I think that when you're kept so pure you don't realize this. When he [her husband] sees I have a book like this that I hide inside of another book because I don't want the children to know what I'm reading, then he knows it's worth reading. This is really where the danger comes in, if you read a book like this and you don't read a lot. It kind of confines you to dirty literature and you don't realize there is a loftier thing in life.

It is interesting that many of these modern "dirty" novels are introduced to Mrs. V. via people other than those she ordinarily meets. More of this later.

As a child, Mrs. V. read a lot, but was not allowed to read her brother's books, nor was she allowed to read as much as she wanted to. Though a good student, "always at the top of her class and disliked for it sometimes," and familiar with books in the home (both the father and mother read, but did not encourage the children to do so), she did not read very extensively, especially during high school, when she had to work.

Her serious reading began a number of years ago when a friend of hers

> asked me, one day, what I was reading. And I told her, and she said, "You're wasting your time; this book holds nothing for you. A woman as busy as you are with your family should spend time on books that are going to shape her life in some way, or the lives around her." She sent over Antigone, and I enjoyed it. I just never knew there books like that written, and then I learned Great Books had Antigone. First I went out and I bought the whole Sophocles trilogy, and I read it, and I went into Great Books after that.

She comments here that she reads so much now because she is trying to make up for her "sterile background." She recalls several books that affected her strongly during the time she was in the Great Books program, although many of the books she read were not among the formal readings, but were suggested to her by her new acquaintances and by her friends.

> I think that The Death of Ivan Ilyich by Tolstoy did change my thought. I realized how [pause] really sterile we are today as far as life goes, I mean life in general. [pause] Here in this story this boy knows how to cope with every kind of sickness that came in the home, and even with death when it came, whereas we today [pause] when [we] are sick, [we] go to the hospital, the dead ones go the undertaker [pause] they're not in the home at all. We really are sheltered from [pause] life [Do you think this is a mistake?] I do. I think it makes us recoil from it Or else we think we have it made. And then when it hits us, it's quite a shock. [How do you feel about his competence?] Well, this boy was a peasant, really a country bumpkin, I guess [pause] and maybe because of this he dealt more with life in its rawness. [pause] I guess the reason it stayed with me is because [pause] I took care of my mother when she was dying, and I felt so inadequate. You know, it's hard to comfort someone who's close to death. And then you realize how ill-prepared we are for life or death [pause] except for the pseudo-type preparation, if you know what I mean, so-called comforting words, which are just something we haven't experienced but are something we have heard said.

Another book that she says left a lasting impression was The Brothers Karamazov, which was in the third-year Great Books sequence (which she did not reach, so she took the book out from the public library).

> I liked it because of the way he made everything fall into place He's a master story teller; he weaves things all through each other, and you can't imagine he's going to get it all untangled, but in the end it is. It all falls into place. I especially liked the part where this priest, actually Ivan Karamazov, is speaking; he's called the Elder, and he said Christ came to earth one day, and he walked here like a human being, and he came to Rome [sic] one day, and the bishop [sic] met him and was unhappy that he came, and Christ said, "Why should you be unhappy?" And this bishop said, "Because we have everything all figured out. Now you come, and you're going to get it all mixed up again." It just shows how quickly people don't want to take their own burdens. In this case it was the bishop who was taking the burden of the people, or if you watch the Sabbath day, and you don't wash your car, this takes the burden of your real relationship to God, which is [pause] it's more personal, it's a realer thing than not washing your car on Sunday, if you know what I mean. Or if you don't send your children to the Christian school-this won't give you salvation. We so quickly take something [pause]

> something we do ourselves, and this isn't salvation [pause] it's a gift; and no matter how we try to live by rules, or penance or anything, I guess it's just human nature to do it this way, and yet [pause] the Bible tells us this isn't the way. It's freer than that. But we're scared to make it that free. But then you get into the field of morality. [pause] You have to remain moral, but until you realize this yourself, no amount of telling or rules can make this morality mean anything to you. I think about these things a lot, I guess, because it's my background. [Was Dostoyevsky right?] Uh huh. I think he was groping, too, though. His answer was Christ, and I guess. [pause] Each person has to come to this decision himself is what I'm trying to say. You can read Dostoyevsky and agree with him, but until you've come through it yourself, he may strengthen your belief a little bit, but [pause] I don't know, each person has to go the way themselves. That's why no priest or rules or anything will do it for you.

The other memorable part of the book for her was the relation of the younger brother, Alyosha, to the Elder. Mrs. V. was struck by what she calls the "earthly" belief that if the Elder's body did not decompose, then he was a saint. When it did decay, Alyosha left the priesthood. On questioning why this should strike her she replied:

> I thought my father was a saint, and when I found out he wasn't it was quite a shock to me. And for a long time [pause] I just didn't believe in God any more. I guess maybe [pause] this was twelve years ago [pause] that that happened. [pause] Maybe there was a relationship; I never thought of that before. [pause] But the other [long pause] maybe the bishop was burdening himself with all the people's problems, and I guess maybe I thought [pause] too, that by going to church twice on Sunday and all these other [pause] very important things would [pause] eventually [pause] bring salvation too.

She recalls another book that was important to her:

> Yes, another book that I read. This dealt with freedom of the press. [pause] I can't remember the name of the book [pause] Areopagitica. Quite a book. [pause] Quite a title. And this influenced me too, because prior to that time I had always thought that books should be properly written or they shouldn't be printed at all. And this really changed my way of thinking. I read Miss Lonelyhearts before I read the Areopagitica, and I thought it was a vile book and that it shouldn't have been printed, and then I reread it last year and found a new [pause] reason, even for it having been written. And I think really it was [pause] partly because of my changed thought on this censorship. Really, you

> learn something from every book you read, and this is enough reason to read [pause] indiscriminately, more or less, [pause] based on your own desires.

Since Mrs. V. received her education from church schools and has formed the vast majority of her friendships within the bounds of the church, books have formed virtually her only source of unorthodox ideas. In many ways, reading has changed her life, broadening her horizons and enriching her experience. But it has also created a widening gulf between her and her husband and between her and her church. Reading has not been an unmixed blessing.

> Some of the things I believe in now my church would not approve of, and it almost scares me sometimes. I brings tussles you know, with myself sometimes, and right now with my husband [pause] because I want my children to go to the public schools. [pause] I want them to go to the high school here. I'm sure if I hadn't read as I have, I wouldn't feel this way today, although I don't know. [pause] Two years ago I went through this [pause] with my first son. [pause] I wanted him to go to the school here, and we talked about it. He [her husband] would hear none of it. He said it was Great Books that made me change my viewpoint about the Christian school, and that summer I had a breakdown. I was just a mess because of it. I ended up going to a psychiatrist, and that's why I suppose I'm still in this conflict. [pause] And that's why I didn't go back [pause] my husband objected strongly. But now it's all started over again. I've got another eighth-grader; he just graduated from eighth, and I don't know where to turn. The reason I really want them to go here is that neither Ernest nor I went to college, and they have such a wonderful counseling program here to help them take the subjects that will benefit them in college or in what capabilities they have. This is lacking in our own school, along with the other separateness that I object to in the Christian school. And I don't know where I'm going to end up on this either.

This concludes our review of the qualitative interviews. There are easily as many important and interesting aspects of reading we have not covered as have been discussed, and there is much more to say and to show about those issues we have talked about. This phase of the pilot study has been fruitful in forming and shaping our thinking, but much is yet to be done.

CHAPTER 2

PATTERNS OF READING: QUANTITATIVE

It is, of course, impossible to quantify or to exhaust the richness of the individual's book habits that we glimpsed in the last chapter. The purpose of this chapter is to prepare the way for quantification of the major dimensions of reading patterns and to illustrate the line of analysis to be taken in order to explain the processes of making and keeping the book-reading audience.

This was, it will be recalled, the basic question that initiated the inquiry, and it can be more sharply formulated as a search for the various combinations of experiences in childhood and in school with those in adult life that hold people within the book reading habit, lead them into it later in life, and prevent them from slipping out of it. To complete the logic, the search also is directed to those factors that prevent people from ever becoming book readers. The translation of this formulation into more precise terms yields the following topology based on early and current reading.

		Early Reading	
		Yes	No
Current Reading	Yes	Regular Readers	Late Starters
	No	Deserters	Non-Readers

Our first task is to fill out the table with reliable data, then to identify the factors that make it come out that way. In addition, there are the major definitional questions and vital social bookkeeping items: What is a reader, what and how much does he read, where does he get his books, and so on. Within these apparently straightforward factual questions there are several crucial theoretical problems about the structure of the book reading audience. These will be identified and discussed as we proceed.

The evidence we have assembled to meet all these issues comes from old surveys that have some useful information in them and from two new surveys designed explicitly for this study.*

The first and major of the latter was a series of questions on book reading included in the NORC Amalgam Survey of June, 1965, administered to a national sample of some 1,500 individuals. The question on current reading was: "Have you read any book, either hard cover or paperback within the past six months? (If you've started but not finished a book, that counts too.)" For early reading the question was: "Thinking back, was there any time in your life when you read a great many books--not counting those required by school or a job?" Confronting the answers to the two questions, we have Table 2.1.

TABLE 2.1

THE DISTRIBUTION OF READERS

(NORC Amalgam, 1965)

		Early Reading		
		Yes	No	
Current Reading	Yes	34%	15%	49%
	No	24	27	51
		58%	42%	100% = (1,466)

At this point it is difficult to comment on these figures, for we have neither any sense of how the answers would vary with different question wordings, nor any standard of comparison to say the distribution is high or low, better or worse, than expected. To fill both these gaps we first divide the table according to the respondent's educational level and then compare it with several other analogous tables taken from other surveys.

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*Question wordings in Appendix 1.

TABLE 2.2

EDUCATIONAL DIFFERENCES IN THE READING DISTRIBUTION

(NORC Amalgam, 1965)

		High School or Better		
		Early Reading		
		Yes	No	
Current Reading	Yes	47%	18%	65%
	No	20	15	35
		67%	33%	100% = (779)

		Less than High School		
		Early Reading		
		Yes	No	
Current Reading	Yes	19%	11%	30%
	No	28	42	70
		47%	53%	100% = (686)

As with almost every aspect of culture, educational attainment is a major consideration, and its influence is clearly seen in Table 2.2, even with such a crude distinction as that between high school graduates versus those with less education. Both the lack of time and the paucity of cases precludes a more refined analysis of this table at the moment. Age, income, occupation, finer gradations of educational level, sex, and the life cycle position are the obvious factors that have to be examined for their influence on this basic distribution of readers.

Another survey we conducted provides a second opportunity to check the variability of these figures. It was a small-scale survey administered to a Kinsey sample,[1] and designed primarily as a methodological instrument to test accuracy of reporting on book reading and book ownership. We will discuss these aspects later. For the moment, we present the results of two questions comparable to the ones used above. The determination of current and early reading comes from the following complex item in the questionnaire: "For each of the periods in your life indicated below, check the box which best described your book reading habits and interests. (Leave blank those columns that don't apply to you.)" (Table 2.3.)

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[1] Since our purpose was mechodological, it made no difference where we secured answers. Therefore, we asked a few teachers of summer program courses at the University of Chicago if they would administer the questionnaire to their classes. About half the returns came from this source. The other half was a mixture of white-collar employees at a Chicago steel plant and individuals attending professional conferences at the University's Center for Continuing Education who agreed to fill out the questionnaire. These groups included nurses and a group of middle management executives from a large food processing company.

TABLE 2.3

	Elementary school A.	High school B.	College C.	The first few years after finishing school D.	Now E.
1. I liked to read and I read a lot					
2. I liked to read but I didn't read very much					
3. I wasn't very interested in reading but I read a lot anyway					
4. I wasn't very interested in reading and I didn't read very much					

In order to be considered an early reader, the respondent had to have "read a lot" sometime during his school career (i.e., a check mark in rows 1 or 3 in at least one of the first three columns). To be a current reader, the respondent had to check Column E, "Now," in rows 1 or 3. Putting the two parts together, the results are shown in Table 2.4. Since the questionnaire was distributed to well-educated people, all but a few were high school or college educated. Table 2.4 includes only those of high school or better education.

TABLE 2.4

THE DISTRIBUTION OF READERS

(Methodological Survey, 1965)

		Early		
		Yes	No	
Current	Yes	51%	4%	55%
	No	32	13	45
		83%	17%	100% = (134)

In spite of the important differences in sampling and in the question wording, the proportion of current readers is remarkably similar to that reported above. The proportion of early readers is far higher, however, and, more important, the balance between late starters and deserters is quite different. It will take much refinement before a firm empirical base can be given to these figures. For now, we have one other source to provide another version of these tables. It is the large-scale and continuing panel study of 1960 college graduates. In the latest wave, three years after they had finished college, the women in the sample were asked to indicate whether or not they "particularly enjoyed" "reading and studying" as well as a series of other things at various times of their lives,[2] including "now," that is, three years after college. These data can be compressed into the same kind of table as before (Table 2.5).

TABLE 2.5

THE DISTRIBUTION OF READERS

(College Graduates, 1964)

		Early		
		Yes	No	
Current	Yes	57%	5%	62%
	No	22	16	38
		79%	21%	100% = (872)

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[2] E.g., in elementary school, high school, college.

Again, the proportion of current readers is quite similar to those presented before, and the proportion of early readers approximates the methodological survey, as in fact does the distribution of late starters and deserters. It is quite important to determine for what groups in the nation the ratio of later starters to deserters is more like our first sample, that is, essentially two to one, and the extent to which the deserters outnumber the late starters is something like four to one, as is the case in the other tables. The long-range prognosis for making readers depends very much on which of these is more nearly right as a whole and for strategic subgroups in the population. One of the most important analytical tasks of the proposed study is to unfold this problem.

From this last survey we have the following evidence, which traces the development of reading interest of these college graduates through their early school years. Table 2.6 shows the transition between reading interests in elementary to high school, from reading in high school to college, and from college to the present.

TABLE 2.6

THE DEVELOPMENT OF READING INTEREST

(College Graduates, 1964)

		I. Elementary School		
		Yes	No	
II. High School	Yes	23%	24%	47%
	No	2	51	53
		25%	75%	100% = (872)

		II. High School		
		Yes	No	
III. College	Yes	43%	31%	74%
	No	4	22	26
		47%	53%	100% = (872)

		III. College		
		Yes	No	
IV. Now	Yes	55%	6%	61%
	No	19	20	39
		74%	26%	100% = (872)

The important points about this table are, first, that during the progression from elementary school through college there are few readers lost, i.e., the proportion of students in the "deserter" rank remains very low (2 and 4 per cent) all through the school years but rises to 19 per cent during the three years after leaving college. This is a familiar finding, but subject to different interpretations, to which we will return later. Second, the table shows a steady building of readers during the school years, i.e., the proportion of "late starters" remains high until the transition from college to adult life. In brief, for those who finish college, the process of building reading interest continues steadily all through the school career. It is only after school that the attrition really begins. We will need sample survey results comparable to these for individuals of different ages and different educational levels before we can generalize these results. Indeed, we will have to refine these particular tables, distinguishing those students who have become housewives from those who are working, and both of these groups from those who have continued their education. In any case, these results encourage our reliance on such survey methods.

So much for this theoretical issue. We turn now to the mundane but important problems of defining what is meant by a reader and of giving quantitative expression to the ephemeral dimensions of readers sketched in the last chapter.

The convincing ease and certainty with which our depth-interview respondents identified themselves and their families as readers or nonreaders is deceptive. In that situation we were freer to clarify what we meant than we will be in the more formal, restricted context of the large scale interview study; there, resolution of the complexities of these concepts will have to be completed ahead of time.

Moreover, it should not be forgotten that even with all these opportunities to correct any misconceptions between the respondent and the interviewer, there were still important errors made with respect to the respondent's own reading and with respect to judging others' reading. Mrs. Kruger's remark that "ours is a mixed marriage; I am a reader and my husband is not," it will be recalled, was poignantly almost true. He was, from her point of view, a nonreader, but by a more neutral accounting he did in fact read some books and know about some books.

The concept of a reader, in short, is a mixed one. The associations clustered around the term are a clotted mixture of how much of what forms and of what quality material is read, not to speak of the often buried notions of reading as a skill to be displayed, or of books as property (and badges of cultural attainment) to be displayed.

At the risk of oversimplification, however, we might say that there are two major components in defining a reader: an objective measure of his book reading, wherby we can establish the threshold of being "in" or "out" of the category, and the person's own definition of himself as someone who reads books. This latter can include the self-delineation along some quasi-quantitative scale: for example, the distinction between (say) a light, moderate, or heavy reader.

First, the objective side: How many books does it take to make a person a reader? How many books do people read? What are the kinds of errors people make in the self-assessment of their reading? These are the problems we briefly review here rather than treat exhaustively.

We begin with the last question first--error in reporting the extent of reading. Two opposite tendencies are at work to engender error. On the one hand, people tend to overstate their reading because of the valued place reading has in our culture. On the other hand, people tend to forget how many books they do read. This was noted in most of the interviews reported in the first chapter. Do the two kinds of error cancel each other, or does one predominate? The methodological survey discussed above addresses itself to this question by asking the respondents to report how many books they had read within the past six months.[3]

The response categories on the self-administered questionnaire are presented in Table 2.7 with the distribution of the answers. The respondents were also asked to list the titles of as many books as they could recall reading during the time period. After they completed the rest of the questionnaire they were asked to take home a second sheet and to consult their family and book collection during the coming week, adding the titles they had forgotten. The results of this experiment are presented in Table 2.7 with the percentage distribution of the answers. In addition, we present for each category the mean number of titles recalled on the spot and the number reported later.

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[3] The selection of this time period reflects a compromise between using the more familiar yearlong interval with its invitation to both inflate and forget uncontrollably, and using the narrower interval of a month (or even shorter time). The gain in accuracy here is offset by the danger of unrepresentativeness of any particular month, given the widespread unevenness of reading thoughout the year. Our judgment, formed over the course of the project, is satisfied with the six-month period as minimizing these errors.

TABLE 2.7

ACCURACY OF THE AMOUNT OF BOOK READING

(Methodological Study, 1965)

Accuracy	Number of Books Read in the Past Six Months					
	One	2-5	6-10	11-20	20 or more	Total
Per cent checking this category	4	30	19	25	22	100 (77)
Mean number of titles first reported	*	4	8	11	17	
Mean number of titles reported subsequently . .	-	7	10	18	26	
Per cent underestimation of titles reported		42	20	39	23	

Unless we have biased this experiment by the language used or by its sample, it appears that the error of estimating book reading is to report fewer books than were actually read, on the average 30 per cent fewer.[4] Note also that there is no consistent tendency for the error either to increase or decrease as the amount of reading goes up.

Both as a check on the representativeness of the methodological survey and to present a broader and firmer basis for estimating the intensity of book reading, we present a comparable distribution of number of books read from the 1965 Amalgam Survey, which used identical response categories. Since the methodological survey's respondents were almost all well educated, we present the results for the total sample as well as for the sample divided into those with high school or better education and those with less than high school (Table 2.8). It should be understood that only readers (having read a book within the past six months) are included in the table.

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[4] One possible source of error is the truncating of the heavy readers' reporting because we did not provide enough room on the first or the second report sheet to list all the books they had read. Another was not having emphasized enough to the respondents the necessity of removing books they had read before the six-month period.

TABLE 2.8

NUMBER OF BOOKS READ (AMONG READERS ONLY)
(NORC Amalgam, 1965)
(Per Cent)

Per Cent Reading	Education		Total
	Less than High School	High School or Better	
One book	12	9	10
Two to five books	55	41	45
Six to ten books	14	20	18
Eleven to twenty books	9	13	12
Twenty-one or more books	10	17	15
Total	100	100	100
N	(209)	(503)	(712)

These figures suggest comparison with two other attempts to measure the extent of book reading. One is the Johnstone NORC survey of 1962 on adult education, and the other is the Survey Research Center study of 1948 reported by Berelson in The Library's Public (Columbia University Press, 1949). The latter is reported to give us a historical basis of comparison. Luckily, the question wordings and the response categories of the two studies are almost identical.

Johnstone reported that 60 per cent of his sample had read a book in the last year (1962). Almost fifteen years earlier, 50 per cent of a comparable sample of adults had read a book a year, a change of only 10 per cent. This is hardly an increase in the number of readers, given greater rate of increase in the proportion of better-educated people. Even more significant is the fact that the distribution of books read is practically unchanged, as shown in Table 2.9.

TABLE 2.9

DISTRIBUTION OF NUMBER OF BOOKS READ

(Per Cent)

Books Read in Past Year	SRC 1948 in Berelson (p. 7)	Johnstone Adult Education 1962
1 - 4	36	37
5 - 14	32	36
15 - 49	18	16
50 + ...	14	11
Total . . .	100	100
N	(1,151)	(2,845)

One other use of these comparative figures is possible and useful. It is to see how the concentration of book use has changed over these past fifteen years. Berelson presented (p. 98) an approximation of the way in which a few people accounted for most of the book use. Both the Johnstone data and the Amalgam material give almost the exact picture. To identify only one point on the curve Berelson indicates that 20 per cent of the users account for 70 per cent of the book use. Using the number of books read as the measure of book use, these two studies each arrive at the same figure: 20 per cent of the readers account for 70 per cent of the books read.

Before leaving the objective aspects of defining the book reader, we have one other experiment from the methodological survey that is useful. It was designed to give us some clue to the error of estimating the number of books in the respondents' homes. During the qualitative interviewing phase of the study we noted that people tended to underestimate the number of books they owned, compared to the actual counting and more trained estimates of the interviewer. The methodological questionnaire included, therefore, a question asking the person to check in the appropriate box the number of books he thought he had in his home.[5] Then, as part of the take-home section of the study, the respondent was asked to count or more accurately estimate the size of his book collection and mark on the sheet his reconsidered statement of the number of books he owned. Again we found the tendency was to underestimate. Of the eighty-six people who answered both parts of this question, 44 per cent did not change their estimates (that is, did not check a different response category), and of the rest, only 7 per cent lowered their initial guess, while 49 per cent increased their estimates. Table 2.10 reports the distribution of these initial and second estimates and shows some index of the magnitude of the errors. Most important, the table includes comparable data taken from the 1960 college graduate study, which used the same question and response categories.

TABLE 2.10

ACCURACY OF COLLECTION SIZE ESTIMATION

(NORC, College Graduate Survey, 1964
and Methodological Survey)

(Per Cent)

Number of Books in Home	NORC, College Graduate Survey, 1964	Methodological Survey	
		Initial (Guessing)	Final (After Counting)
0-50	15	23	10
50-74	15	9	8
75-99	7	3	12
100-149	18	12	7
150-199	11	10	12
200-249	10	9	6
250-299	6	9	6
300-349	5	5	3
350-499	5	6	10
500-999	6	7	17
1,000 + ...	2	7	9
Total	100	100	100
N	(872)		(86)

---

[5] These were the response categories:

Less than 50 books	50-74	75-99	100-149	150-199	200-249	250-299	300-349	350-499	500-999	1,000 +

The college student study reveals a distribution of book ownership not radically different from the initial estimates of our methodological survey, suggesting that our respondents to the small survey, though heavier readers than the public at large, and perhaps older and of higher incomes, do not differ radically from the college-educated youngsters sampled in the NORC study. With more intensive analysis of these materials we will be more able to correct the estimates of book ownership derived from the larger study.

Our conclusion from this exploration of the quantity of book reading is that there is sufficient reliability of estimating how much reading is done to continue using these kinds of questions. There is still work to be done in identifying the kinds of errors that are made, but we feel that a good start has been made.

Finally, and more substantively, these data help us identify if only negatively, where to look for the explanation of the great expansion of book sales during the past decade and a half. At this point we are forced to conclude that there is neither a great expansion of the proportion of adults who are reading books, compared to fifteen years ago, nor does it appear that those who are readers have increased the number of books read. We will pursue this puzzle as we proceed with the review of the survey results.

We turn now to the second component of defining a book reader, the person's designation of himself as a reader. Not surprisingly, we know of no survey question that directly asks the person whether he considers himself a book reader, either in a straightforward manner or through some indirect procedure. The slivers of evidence we actually have mix qualitative, all-or-none identification as a reader with a quasi-quantitative notion of more and less. This is, perhaps, all to the good, since they are really closely related. That is, although we know that the stages of growth are continuous year by year, we still distinguish the man from the boy. It is the modulations between these two ways of defining growth that we wish to explore.

In the Johnstone adult education study the respondents were asked a series of questions about the regularity with which they read newspapers, magazines, and books. At the end of this series of questions was a summarizing item which asked: "Altogether would you describe yourself as a heavy reader, a moderate reader, a light reader, or a nonreader?" The response to this question is shown in Table 2.11.

TABLE 2.11

DISTRIBUTION OF READERS: SELF-DESIGNATION

(Adult Education Survey, 1962)

Heavy readers	12%
Moderate readers	33
Light readers	46
Nonreaders	9
Total	100% = (2,845)

The distribution looks very much like that of Table 2.9, which shows the number of books read, if we interpret the numerical categories of one to four books as the light reader, two to twenty-four as the moderate reader, and more than twenty-five as the heavy reader. It would be comforting if the estimates and the subjective assessment matched. Unfortunately, the world is not so tidy. Table 2.12 indicates the self-designation as to degree of involvement in reading. The actual count of books read is only "moderately" related.

TABLE 2.12

ACTUAL READING AND SELF-DESIGNATION OF READING

(Adult Education Study, 1962)

(Per Cent)

Number of Books Read Last Year	Self-Designation			
	Heavy Reader	Moderate Reader	Light Reader	Nonreader
None	5	19	50	86
1-4	7	22	27	8
5-24	28	43	17	1
25 or more	55	12	2	*
Don't know	5	4	4	5
Total	100	100	100	100
N	(340)	(927)	(1,309)	(269)

*Less than one-half of 1 per cent.

There is in fact a fair degree of agreement between the actual estimation of how many books are read and what kind of reader the person thinks he is. This is especially true of the "nonreader." As we concluded from the qualitative interviews, there is little doubt about the boundary between reader and nonreader.

However, the fuzziness of the self-conception as a reader arises among those who have some commitment, however minimal, to books. And it is not clear at this point whether it is the cultural aspiration toward books, the perhaps accidental and minimal use of books, the advertisement of the cultural skills, the ownership of some books, the reading about books in magazines, or, finally, the reading of magazines and newspapers themselves, aside from books, that makes people call themselves readers when in fact they read very few books.

Whichever it is, and it is certain to be a bit of all of them, these partial associations between the objective and the subjective definitions of being a reader require further analysis. We will propose an intensive reanalysis of the survey materials that we have just barely tapped, as well as the tailoring of new survey instruments for the exploration of this issue.[6] We can indicate that kind of analysis by relating the extent of magazine reading to book reading. Several surveys provide us with some information. For example, a recent NORC study concerned with occupational prestige asked the standard items about magazine and book reading. The results were as shown in Table 2.13. The validity of these figures is confirmed by the Adult Education study, where the distribution in Table 2.14 was found.

TABLE 2.13

DISTRIBUTION OF BOOK AND MAGAZINE READING
(NORC, Adult Sample, 1963)

		Read Magazines Regularly		
		Yes	No	
Read Books within Year	Yes	45%	12%	57%
	No	20	23	43
		65%	35%	100% = (648)

---

[6] The Adult Education Survey, for example, can show us the relations between the extent of newspaper, magazine, and book reading, their interrelations, and the relations of these quasi-objective assessments to the subjective judgment as to which medium is most important.

TABLE 2.14

DISTRIBUTION OF BOOK AND MAGAZINE READING
(NORC, Adult Education, 1962)

Read Magazines Regularly

		Yes	No	
Read Books within Year	Yes	49%	12%	61%
	No	21	18	39
		70%	30%	100% = (2,845)

Note first the relatively close agreement in the percentage of book readers compared with the studies reported above. These are intriguing figures. What kinds of people are the 12 per cent who read books but not magazines? Are they mystery story fans, serious scholars who interpret the term magazine as meaning the popular, general-purpose periodical rather than their specialized journals, or what? What kinds of people are the 23 per cent who have the skill and motivation to maintain a magazine reading habit but do not read books? Are they people with relatively low reading skills who simply select material they can handle in the popular magazines, or are they people with more restricted tastes and interests responding to the vast differences in the availability of magazines as compared to books? And what of the 23 per cent of the people who read neither books nor magazines? How far out of the world of ideas that circulate through books and magazines are they? Does their reading of the newspaper give them anything more than national headlines, local stories, and "Dear Abby?" And how often do the accidental contacts with books or with people who read books provide these individuals with the same cognitive premises and moral perspectives that are reinforced by a continuing familiarity with books?

We can only extend the analysis to a slight degree, first by seeing how the distribution of these kinds of readers varies by age and education. Table 2.15 presents the data, collapsed for simplicity from the original nine fourfold tables.

It is clear that both variables importantly influence the combinations of book and magazine reading. As we have seen before, education and reading go hand in hand; in terms of both magazines and of books, the more education people have,

TABLE 2.15

AGE AND EDUCATIONAL DIFFERENCES IN READING

(NORC, Adult Education, 1962)

(Per Cent)

College			High School			Elementary School		
Read Books	Read Magazines	Read Neither	Read Books	Read Magazines	Read Neither	Read Books	Read Magazines	Read Neither
				AGE GROUP - UNDER 35				
81	89	1	70	68	14	61	35	39
	N = (71)			N = (155)			N = (23)	
				AGE GROUP - 35 TO 55				
77	91	5	52	65	23	31	27	60
	N = (57)			N = (133)			N = (45)	
				AGE GROUP - OVER 55				
60	81	6	39	68	27	27	45	47
	N = (32)			N = (44)			N = (85)	

the more they read. A more surprising observation is that people seem to read fewer books as they grow older, although their use of magazines remains virtually unchanged.

The other variable that has comparable impact, as one might expect, is family income. Table 2.16 shows the interaction between education, income, and reading. Note the dramatic shift between the highest and lowest groups. In the former, 74 per cent are book and magazine readers and 0 per cent read neither; in the latter the situation is close to reversing itself--only 17 per cent read books and magazines, while 53 per cent read neither. Book reading and magazine reading seem to be affected almost equally.

TABLE 2.16

EDUCATION AND INCOME DIFFERENCES IN BOOK AND MAGAZINE READING

(NORC, Adult Education, 1962)

INCOME-EDUCATION INDEX[a]

1

		Read Magazines		
		Yes	No	
Read Books	Yes	74%	9%	83%
	No	17	0	17
		91%	9%	100% = (93)

2

		Read Magazines		
		Yes	No	
Read Books	Yes	51%	11%	62%
	No	26	12	38
		77%	23%	100% = (184)

3

		Read Magazines		
		Yes	No	
Read Books	Yes	41%	14%	55%
	No	21	24	45
		62%	38%	100% = (209)

4

		Read Magazines		
		Yes	No	
Read Books	Yes	17%	13%	30%
	No	17	53	70
		34%	66%	100% = (126)

---

[a] The Income-Education Index has been used to collapse this table to a more manageable form. Index numbers were assigned on the following scheme:

Education	College		High School		Elementary School	
Income ($1,000's)	7+	7-	7+	7-	7+	7-
Income-Education Index	1	2	2	3	3	4

This is as far as we can pursue these questions here. It is clear that matching magazine with book reading (as shown in Table 2.16) is a sensitive tool for exploring the separate effects of skills and interests on the one hand and availability on the other.

Next is the problem of where people get books. The last extended view of this question was made by Berelson in 1948. His summary view of the then available studies indicated that the bookstore, the public library, and borrowing from private collections were the three major and almost equal sources of books,[7] with the bookstore probably being slightly more frequently used.

The situation today is not much different. The only contemporary data we have is our Amalgam Survey, which asked in two ways where people got books. The respondents were first asked where they get the books they read, and all the sources they suggested were recorded. Then they were asked where they got most of their books The answers to both these questions are presented in Table 2.17.

TABLE 2.17

SOURCES OF BOOKS

(NORC Amalgam, 1965)

(Per Cent)

Amount of Use	Sources					
	Public Library	Bookstore[a]	Book Club	Private Collection[b]	Other	Base N
Major source	21	33	11	21	14	(712)
Source used at all	31	56	19	58	20	(712)

[a] Includes buying from store and gifts from store.

[b] Includes borrowing and own collection.

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[7] SOURCES OF BOOKS -- ADULTS

(Per Cent)

(SRC, 1948)[a]

Source	Per Cent
Public library	25
School library	0
Friends	20
Purchase and home lib.	35
Rental library	8
Other sources	10

[a] Berelson, p. 11.

An important question here is the relation between the amount of reading and where people get books. Where does the heavy reader get most of his books; where does the minimal reader get his? The Amalgam Survey provides a hint (Table 2.18).

TABLE 2.18

AMOUNT OF READING AND SOURCES OF BOOKS

(NORC Amalgam, 1965)

(Per Cent)

Sources of Books	Types of Readers		
	Minimal (1-5 Books)[a]	Moderate (6-20 Books)	Heavy (21 Books or More)
Public library . . .	17	23	29
Bookstore	34	31	34
Book club	14	15	9
Private collection .	22	20	16
Other	12	10	11
No answer	1	1	1
Total	100	100	100
Total N	(393)	(215)	(104) = 712

[a] We have tentatively divided the reader into three groups by the number of books they have read in the past six months.

The results in Table 2.18 are interesting, though of course they should be treated tentatively. It appears that the heavier the reader, the greater the use of the public library. If this finding is sustained in a larger study, then public library goals and policies ought to be responsive to this. Much has to be learned about the nature of these heavy readers and the share they constitute of the total population of library users before these findings can be used in policy decisions.

Repercentaging the table with regard to the source rather than the reader shows that 45 per cent of the library's users are minimal readers and only 21 per cent are heavy readers. The comparable figures for bookstores are 67 per cent and

15 per cent, which suggests that bookstores, more than libraries, are the market place for the minimal readers. This signals a critical theoretical issue which will be discussed below.

Note also in Table 2.18 the intriguing results that (1) book clubs appear to serve the light reader more than the heavy, and that (2) the use of books from private collections also declines for those who read a great deal. Many factors have to be taken into account before these figures can be usefully interpreted, including, most obviously, the income of the individual, the availability of books in the community, and the community's general level of "bookishness."

We shade now from the gross architecture of reading into the finer but equally important distinction of what is read.[8] The information at the moment is slim, but it promises much riches. We begin with the compilation of data from the college graduate study which asked whether the respondents read "serious fiction, nonfiction, and poetry" frequently, occasionally, seldom, or never. The total results are shown in Table 2.19.

TABLE 2.19

TYPES OF READING PREFERENCES

(NORC College Graduate Survey, 1964)

(Per Cent)

Frequency	Types of Reading		
	Nonfiction	Serious Fiction	Poetry
Frequently . .	40	28	8
Occasionally .	40	40	24
Seldom or never	20	32	68
Total . .	100	100	100

N = (2,219)

---

[8] It is sad to report that none of the studies we have examined, including our own, asked questions allowing us to study the differential use of paperback and hard-cover books. While there are many industry-supported and academic studies on the paper-bound book, there are none current or comprehensive enough to be cited here. This will be a major task of the proposed study, one that promises to be especially fruitful, since we are likely to secure accurate and comprehensive data on the availability of the paperbound book through the cooperation of the industry's trade association.

These are useful figures only if we have some basis of comparison, especially from a contrast between educational levels, occupational status, income, and so forth. We finesse that line of analysis to suggest the kind of question that we will pursue in the proposed study; it is an analysis of the relationship between the types of reading a person engages in. The qualitative interview revealed abundantly that a person with adequate reading skills uses a variety of books. We felt, on the basis of those interviews, that the book was a protean instrument, fitting almost every need. Table 2.20, which shows the relation of fiction to nonfiction reading, reinforces this conclusion.

TABLE 2.20

FICTION AND NONFICTION READING
(NORC College Graduate Survey, 1964)
(Per Cent)

		Nonfiction			
		Frequently	Occasionally	Seldom-Never	
Fiction	Frequently	21	7	1	29
	Occasionally	13	22	4	39
	Seldom-Never	6	11	15	32
		40	40	20	100

N = (2,219)

There is, of course, a correlation between fiction and nonfiction reading, but not a very high one. The extent of that relationship for specific educational groups and for individuals in book-rich and book-poor environments needs exploration. This is clearly a major task for the larger study: first, the secondary analysis of this previously gathered data, and subsequently, the collection of new and more refined data.

Substantively, however, the fiction versus nonfiction distinction is but a crude approximation to a more detailed picture of the diversity of books read. The qualitative interviews indicated the range of that diversity. The Amalgam Survey domesticated to a controllable extent the variety of a person's reading habits.

Table 2.21 shows the distribution responses to a question asking to what extent the respondents read in each of several subject areas.

TABLE 2.21

FREQUENCY OF TYPES OF BOOK READING (AMONG READERS ONLY)
(NORC Amalgam, 1965)
(Per Cent)

Type of Book	Frequently	Occasionally	Hardly Ever	Never	Total
Fiction-classic or current .	37	33	20	10	100
Mysteries, westerns, science fiction, humor	21	32	24	23	100
Social science, business, politics	15	26	26	33	100
Plays, poetry, art, music .	13	25	24	38	100
Science or technology . . .	10	20	24	46	100
Histories or biographies . .	26	41	16	17	100
Religious books (other than the Bible)	24	30	21	25	100
Books on health or family care	16	36	21	27	100
Self-improvement books . . .	15	33	20	32	100
Hobbies, sports, gardening, cookbooks, home repair, home decoration, travel .	31	36	13	20	100
Books connected with respondent's occupation . .	32	19	9	40	100
Any other kind of book . . .	7	4	3	86	100

N = (712)

The complexities in analyzing this kind of data are enormous. We will need this type of previously gathered survey material to experiment with in order to devise ways of compressing and understanding the diversity of reading patterns.

As for explaining why people read what they do, we will use all the information we can gather about their past and all we can learn about their present lives. We have already seen some tables that show a great deal. These are based on the familiar demographic variables: age, income, sex, and so on. We shall go as far as we can with these variables. The qualitative interviews convince us, however, that much more subtle variables have to be taken into account. We close this chapter with a table from the methodological survey which hopefully suggests the fruitful interchange between the intimate personal interview and the large-scale rigorous survey. It shows the relationship between current reading (those who say they "read a lot now") and early school experiences with reading. One important feature of the table is that it shows we can successfully ask respondents to differentiate between their interest in reading and the actual amount of reading they did at various times in their school careers. The data were taken from the question shown on page 36 above. The substantive issue is important. Which is more important, an interest in reading, or having had the experience of reading, or both? Table 2.22 suggests an answer that we might believe if we were more secure about some of the adjacent issues.

TABLE 2.22

CURRENT READING AND EARLY READING EXPERIENCE AND INTEREST

(Methodological Survey, 1965)

(Per Cent)

Current Reading	During School Experience Respondent Was			
	Interested in Reading		Not Interested in Reading	
	And Read a Lot	But Did Not Read	But Read a Lot	And Did Not Read
Those "reading a lot now" .	72	33	55	0
Total N .	(69)	(21)	(11)	(5)

Given the limitations of this study, we might infer that actual reading, with or without an interest in reading, was more important than interest without reading.

Such a conclusion has great implications on the degree of permissiveness used in the teaching of reading and its encouragement. This is a complex issue and no single or simple survey question will give reliable answers. Yet, it is not to be ignored that such a simple question yields such strong and clear differences. We turn in Chapter 3 to another equally complex set of factors influencing reading--the current availability of books.

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CHAPTER 3

THE AVAILABILITY OF BOOKS

In order to be useful, the ancient axiom that the extent of book reading depends on the availability of books needs a richer conceptualization and more precise measurement than is usually given. This chapter reports our thinking on the problem to date and presents the materials we have now assembled or are in the process of collecting.

We have posed four sets of questions, each one of which will be discussed below: 1) What are the components of the book availability concept, 2) How do communities vary in book availability, 3) What differences in book reading result from variations in availability, and 4) What accounts for the differences in communities' supplies of books?

Defining Book Availability

The measurement of a community's supply of books actually involves several different kinds of notions, all of which have to be taken into account for a full picture of availability. The following enumeration, moving from the concrete to the intangible, outlines the major components.

1) The number of outlets where books can be found.--The number of branch libraries, bookstores, and distribution points for paperbacks are the obvious items here. These are clearly public outlets. On the other hand, special libraries and college and university libraries are, to varying degrees, restricted to specific segments of the total population, but they must nevertheless be added to the total number of outlets. An important aspect of the number of outlets is their spatial distribution and ease of access, but the measurement of these factors is difficult and in our final assessment may ultimately rest upon individual attitudes and opinions recorded through sample survey procedures.

Book clubs, publishers' mail solicitations, and door-to-door sales efforts, all important sources of books, do not fit readily into the concept of "number of outlets." The measure of availability for these book channels has to be expressed differently as will be seen subsequently.

2) The number of books in the community.--With all their imperfections, the statistics on library holdings are still the best estimates we can find. For bookstores the absence of any systematic data on book inventory forces us to use sales figures.

The distinction between the number of volumes and the number of titles should be noted here. The extent of duplication in public library systems and in bookstores is an important issue and will also be discussed below.

A second and related distinction is the difference between numbers of volumes expressed in per capita terms and their absolute number. Thus, for example, New York City has fewer volumes per capita than Duluth. But who can deny the greater "availability" of New York's Public Library compared to Duluth's? This absolute level of book stock, indicating the range and depth of the collection, will be taken into account in the final assessment of a community's book resources.

3) More intangible than the previous measures is the ease of access, physical and intellectual, to the stock of books. There are a variety of barriers between people and books, including the location and accessibility of bookstores and libraries, and the quality of service they provide. Some of these barriers are in the minds of the potential users--fears, prejudices, and ignorance of the facilities and the ways of using them efficiently or at all. Some are on the side of the library and book store personnel whose ignorance of the books and how to find them, or whose slackness of policy with respect to courtesy and efficiency may deter effective use of the books that are physically present.

4) Most intangible of all is the idea of the quality of a community's book resources. We have in mind here the depth, range, and diversity of the community's books. This is a difficult concept to define and even more difficult to measure, but it is clearly an aspect of book availability that cannot be ignored.

Some of these aspects of book availability can be measured empirically from previously gathered statistics, others will require information from individuals secured by sample survey techniques. Still other aspects of book availability, however, require an on-the-spot assessment, and a new technique for this will be suggested and discussed in the last part of this chapter and in the research proposal.

Before an overall index of book availability can be presented, it is necessary to identify its components. We, therefore, turn to the specific book channels and to the problems of their measurement.

Community Differences in Book Availability

In an ordinary American city there are a surprisingly large number of ways to obtain a book. The following list is a fairly complete listing of the sources for adult books.

1. Public libraries
2. Research and special libraries (public and private)
3. College and university libraries
4. Rental libraries
5. Bookstores (new and used)
6. Mass paperback outlets
7. Book clubs
8. Direct mail from publishers
9. Local direct sales (subscription books largely)
10. Private collections (i.e., rereading one's own books and borrowing from friends)

For some of these sources reliable quantitative information is immediately at hand. For others the necessary data can probably be secured given sufficient diligence and diplomacy, and for others it is unlikely that anything can be done at present. In addition to the complexities of collecting and assessing the information for each book source individually, there are problems in making the estimates of the different channels commensurate with each other. For example, public library holdings are a plausible measure of availability, but is the size of the inventory of the city's bookstores comparable to it, or, is the number of book club members in the community comparable to these? Indeed, is this latter a measure of book availability at all? Book club membership could just as well be thought of as an index of book use rather than availability. This is actually the important distinction between "stock and flow" which, even to a greater extent, blurs when private collections are considered as a book source, since at some time before they were defined, and rightly so, as book use (i.e., as new books bought from the store).

Another difficulty in comparisons between sources is in counting their outlets. The number of branch libraries is an important component of a sophisticated availability index, and to some extent the number of bookstores is a comparable one, but again what is the analogous measure for book clubs, for direct mail sales, and for door-to-door encyclopedia sales? The various book sources are also not comparable in the degree to which measures of the number of books available is related to the number of titles in stock. Bookstores, for instance, probably have far fewer titles per thousand books than libraries. Finally, they are not comparable in the extent to which their index of availability is related to book use. The different channels are likely to circulate books through a community at different speeds. For example, a bestseller bought by the library is likely to be read by more people than the one bought from the store or delivered by the mailman.

We will not be able to avoid these difficulties all the time; direct comparisons in absolute terms of how well the various channels serve the community must be assayed no matter how hedged with qualifications. Yet for some purposes we can avoid the problems discussed above by using figures based on each community's position relative to the others. That is, for each book channel, the communities we are interested in will be ranked from (say) the one with the most public library books per capita to the one with the least. The number of bookstores will be similarly ranked. We can then compare the relation between a city's library resources with its bookstores by a confrontation of the two rank positions. The disadvantage of this approach is there might not be any distinction made between a city where libraries are ten times as important in making books available as bookstores and another city where libraries are only twice as important as bookstores. (In more technical terms, a rank ordering is not an equal interval scale.)

Several other problems plague us in assessing book availability. One of the most difficult is defining the geographical unit to be studied. This is really a two-part problem of first selecting the proper universe of communities to deal with and second, defining their boundaries properly. As with almost all such problems, solutions are dictated by the nature of the data we have to work with. For a variety of reasons we have concentrated on the city as the basic unit. For this pilot study only forty-three cities have been intensively analyzed. They have been selected from the full set of Standard Metropolitan Areas comprising the NORC Primary Sampling Units. Since our research agenda calls for interviewing individuals in communities whose book availability is known, the selection of metropolitan areas where NORC has a field staff seemed the most efficient procedure, and one which would not too seriously distort the national picture.

Although we have, in the interest of more manageable statistics, used cities in this preliminary study, we are aware that we must face up to the reality of the metropolitan situation. In the large study we will, of course, deal with the entire metropolitan areas, comparing the different patterns in availability between city and suburbs as well as those between metropolitan areas.

Another difficult problem we have avoided rather than solved, is the distinction between adult and juvenile books. We have had to ignore the distinctions in most instances. Public library statistics are given in terms of total circulation, total holdings, and total expenditures because there are no reliable statistics on adult holdings, even though, paradoxically, adult and juvenile circulation figures' are often presented separately. Bookstore sales are also not broken down into adult and juvenile categories. Perhaps only the book club data and the material on special libraries and college libraries reflect exclusively adult books. This blurring of adult and children's book availability and use is unfortunate, but cannot be resolved until statistical procedures are improved.

This is similar to another basic problem, the necessity of using per capita figures in order to compare areas of different population sizes. This practice, while necessary, obscures the fact that only a very small proportion of the population is actually using the books. Indeed, one of the most important problems we want to explore is the nature of this concentration of book use. We would like to identify how cities vary in the concentration or diffusion of their reading publics across a narrow or a broad population base. No statistical series can provide this information with the exception of library circulation transaction card analysis. Intensive survey data, sampling the population as a whole, can establish the shape of these concentrations of use distributions, as the previous chapter has shown.

There is finally the problem of how far we should go in measuring availability. For example, should we take into account book advertising in newspapers and magazines? How much effort should be made to secure this data, and how important is it in determining book use? For the moment we leave this particular issue open. We turn now to a review of the material for each of the ten book channels.

For the first four sources of books we explain in some detail how the quantitative estimates were secured. The data on which these estimates were based are contained in Appendix 2. Only a summary table (Table 3.1) ranking each of the cities on these four sources is included in the text. The interested readers can check for himself the great degree of variation in book supply within each type of source public, academic, and special libraries and bookstores. These absolute variations in book availability are impressive and one of the most important findings of the pilot study.

1. Public libraries.--Three sources of data provide the statistical picture for public library availability.

First was the excellent series prepared by the U.S. Office of Education.[1] Its data on holdings, circulation, expenditure, and size of population served for the major public libraries in our forty-three cities were used extensively. Second was the American Library Directory (23rd Ed.),[2] which gave the number of branches in the city library systems and provided background as to the city and country boundaries of service. The third source was state library reports and special material from particular city libraries. These provided data on the suburban areas around the central cities.

For the central cities of the forty-three metropolitan areas we have developed the following measures: a) An index of the dispersion of the library system, i.e., the number of people per branch. b) An index of the holdings of the branches, i.e., volumes per branch. These two measures are related mathematically to the more familiar measures, number of books per capita and number of branches, but appear more useful since they show us how communities vary in the dispersion of their books from the one extreme of having very few branches heavily packed to the other of having a large number of branches with few books in each. c) An index of the system's quality as estimated by a measure of past and present performance in book buying. Specifically the numbers of volumes (preferably titles) held in the central library and the number of titles added to the system in a recent year. d) An index of the staffing and service as reflected in library expenditures per capita. We are still in the process of securing information on the last component of the public library availability index, so it is not included in this report. A questionnaire effort to the library systems in the forty-three communities is under way and when completed will allow us to include item c) in the final evaluation of the cities' library systems.

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[1] U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Office of Education, Library Services Branch. Library Statistics--Statistics of Public Library Systems Serving Populations of 100,000 or More (35,000-49,999)(50,000-99,999): Fiscal Year 1960, pub. 1961, 1962.

[2] American Library Directory, 23rd ed. New York, R. R. Bowker Co., 1962.

Table 1 in Appendix 2 presents our current assessments of the libraries. The forty-three cities are listed with their 1960 populations, the number of people per branch, the number of volumes per branch, the rank ordering of both of these two latter measures, and a combined index to be discussed shortly. The combined index is also included in Table 3.1. In all our rank order availability tables the smallest numbers indicate the highest availability.

The variation in people per branch and volumes per branch is unmistakably of considerable magnitude and not closely correlated to the population of the city. (The rank order correlations between the city's population and people per outlet is .27; between population and volumes per outlet it is -.29; and the combined index is correlated to population only to the extent of .06.) Clearly, in cities of this size range, public library resources don't have much to do with population. The relationship between these two measures is perhaps better appreciated in graphic form. Figure 3.1 shows the distribution of the forty-three cities in a grid defined vertically by the people per branch and horizontally by the number of volumes per branch.

The best library service is clearly in the lower left-hand corner, where there are lots of branches with plenty of books in them; at the upper right--the opposite extreme--are few branches, and these without many books. The dotted lines fanning upward from the lower-right-hand side are what we might call "iso-availability

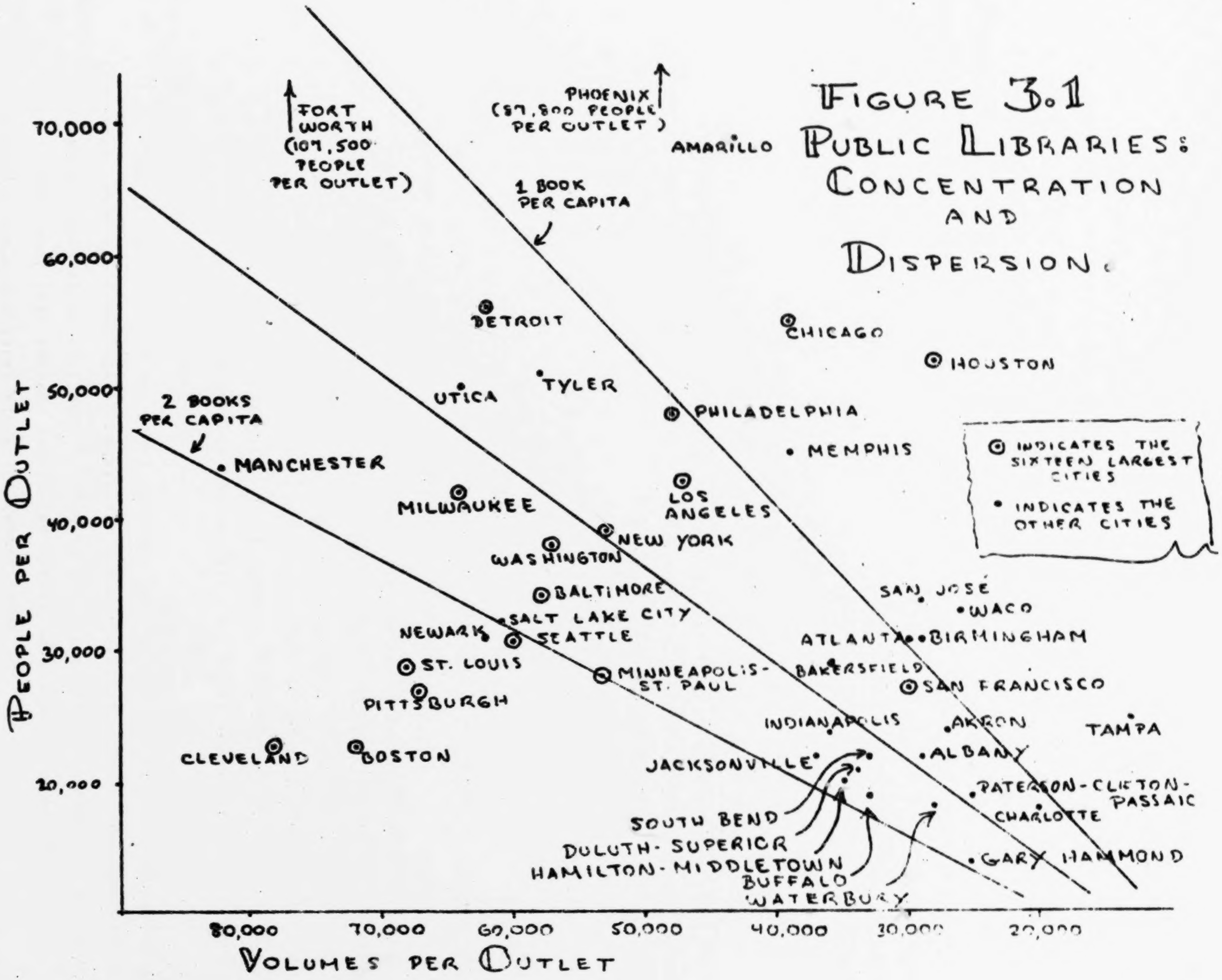

FIGURE 3.1 PUBLIC LIBRARIES: CONCENTRATION AND DISPERSION.

lines." All cities on a given line have the same number of books per capita, but these at the lower right have centralized them into a few branches, those moving up and left are dispersing their books into more branches. Clearly, there is great variation not only in the total resources of the cities--compare Boston and Cleveland with Phoenix and Houston--but there is also much variation in the way cities of comparable resources allocate them in their branch systems--compare Detroit and Charlotte. Actually, the rank order correlations between the two measures is -.436, indicating a moderately strong and self-explanatory relationship. There appears, however, to be some tendency for the better libraries, those down in the lower left corner, to be clustered fairly close together. This suggests either some consensus of opinion on the optimum size of branch or some built-in constraints, present or past, that make for the similarity. It is interesting that the sixteen largest of these metropolitan cities--indicated by the large circles-especially show this range of book supply, yet at the same time almost all fall in a narrow band in the center of the graph. This indicates they have all found some similar point balancing dispersion and concentration, regardless of the absolute numbers of books per capita they have. In contrast, most of the smaller cities seems to have opted for greater dispersion. There is a shadowy suggestion that the cites in this central band are either superior libraries, juding by their reputation among librarians, or the cities are large and have a reputation for sophistication. The inference needing investigation is that these are the cities with a wealth of finely assimilated library experience and a pool of talent superior to other areas.

The simplest way to combine the two measures into a single availability score is to treat them equally by just averaging their ranks. This procedure skirts the difficult but important question as to what we really mean by availability--giving a few titles to many people via high branch dispersion, or providing book resources in depth by fewer but larger branches. This issue will be explored in detail when we add the other measures of library availability discussed above. For the moment, the easy way out is sufficient.

The first column of Table 3.1 (and the last column of Table 1 in Appendix 2), therefore, show the consolidated rankings for the libraries. These rankings mirror the graphic presentation of Figure 1, showing the expected clustering of high ranked cities in the lower left corner, low ranked cities in the upper right, and those in the middle ranks scattered along the center bands.

TABLE 3.1

AVAILABILITY EQUALS RANK ORDERINGS

Cities in Order of Population	Public Libraries	Book Stores	Academic Libraries	Special Libraries	Consolidated Index
New York	27.5[a]	7.5	19.5	5	10
Chicago	39.5	13	28	6.5	21
Los Angeles	31.5	20	10	21	17
Philadelphia	33	16	15.5	4	12
Detroit	29.5	35	29	29	34
Baltimore	19.5	10	9	10	8
Houston	43	36.5	22	28	37
Cleveland	1	29.5	17.5	15	11
Minneapolis-St. Paul .	9	15	3	6.5	5
Washington	21.5	3	6	1	4
St. Louis	4	21.5	5	10	13
Milwaukee	17	21.5	15.5	37	23
San Francisco	27.5	1	17.5	3	9
Boston	2	2	7	2	1
Pittsburgh	3	9	1.5	12.5	2
Seattle	6.5	6	13	14	6
Buffalo	12	29.5	21	23.5	20
Memphis	35	42	11.5	30	33
Atlanta	34	18	23.5	17	24
Indianapolis	15	32	31	16	25
Phoenix	37.5	36.5	35	35	43
Newark	5	27.5	39.5	23.5	27
Fort Worth	25.5	24	8	21	15
Birmingham	37.5	34	30	32.5	39
Akron	31.5	25.5	26.5	32.5	32
Gary-Hammond	18	43	39.5	41.5	41.5

[a] Most ranks are whole numbers, but in the case of ties between cities their ranks are averaged, yielding a fractional rank.

TABLE 3.1--Continued

Cities in Order of Population	Public Libraries	Book Stores	Academic Libraries	Special Libraries	Consolidated Index
Paterson-Clifton-Passaic	21.5	39.5	39.5	41.5	41.5
Tampa	36	33	32	36	40
San Jose	14	11	11.5	38.5	14
Charlotte	24	14	26.5	38.5	29
Jacksonville	9	19	33	21	16
Salt Lake City	12	5	4	8	3
Duluth-Superior	12	39.5	39.5	19	31
Amarillo	39.5	24.5	34	34	38
South Bend	15	27.5	19.5	26	22
Albany	19.5	4	14	10	7
Middletown-Hamilton . .	6.5	12	39.5	27	19
Waterbury	15	38	39.5	31	35
Utica	23	31	39.5	12.5	30
Waco	42	41	1.5	18	28
Manchester	9	23	22.5	40	26
Bakersfield	25.5	7.5	25	25	18
Tyler	29.5	17	39.5	43	36

2. Bookstores.--We mean here the retail outlet that handles new hard-cover books, although there is hardly a bookstore that does not sell something else, including paperbacks. Three sources provide the statistical material: a) the 1958 Census of Business; Retail Trade Area Statistics,[3] b) the 1948 American Book Trade Directory (14th Ed.),[4] and c) information from the American Booksellers Association, to be described in detail below. None of these is adequate by itself, yet, each adds some useful information to the total picture.

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[3] U.S. Bureau of the Census. U.S. 1958 Census of Business, V. 2., Retail Trade Area Statistics. Washington, 1961.

[4] American Book Trade Directory, 14th ed. New York: R. R. Bowker Co., 1958.

The strengths and weakness of these three sources need only be sketched here. The Book Trade Directory lists about 8,600 bookstores. It has no record of book sales, but is a very extensive listing of stores in the major cities in which we are interested. The Census of Business enumerates about 9,400 bookstores and stationery stores, but the data are far richer. Total sales receipts are given by community; other sales and personnel data invite more intensive analysis. The disadvantage is that the fastidiousness of the Census Bureau's protection of its respondent's anonymity results in a spotty coverage of sales figures: only thirty-one of the forty-three cities show the dollar bookstore and stationery store sales. The third source, made possible through the generous cooperation of the American Booksellers Association, is particularly useful because it gives us the distribution of the sizes of the bookstores serving a community. The bookstore members of the ABA have a dues assessment based on the store's annual sale of books.[5]

The major weakness of the American Booksellers Association data is the limited membership of the association--only about 2,200 members nationally. Yet this very restriction of membership in the ABA may be a mark of high level bookstore service and management. Book industry lore insists on the influence of the strong "personal" bookstore, and such stores, we are told, are well represented in the American Booksellers Association.

The recipe we devised to incorporate all three sources is again the simple one. The cities were ranked from best to worst by the number of people per bookstore and by book sales per capita.[6] These two rankings were averaged to give consolidated rankings for bookstores, which are included in Table 3.1. (Table 2 in Appendix 2 presents the individual and consolidated rankings as well as the actual figures.) Here, as with the public library, the range of variation is impressive.

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[5] This is a cleaner measure of book sales, since the U.S. Census of Business records only a combined sales figure for all stores falling in the bookstore and stationery store categories. The result is an uncertain mix of dollars for books, birthday cards, and ballpoint pens. The relation between "bookstore sales" proper and "bookstore and stationery store sales" shown in Appendix 3, is made possible by the Census' presentation of more detailed data for a few major metropolitan areas.

[6] Ranking by book sales per capita was not possible, of course, with the figures from the American Book Trade Directory or the Census of Business, so only the data from the American Booksellers' Association were used. Sales figures are our only clue to inventory, and not a good one at that, since there is probably a large and unknown degree of variation in the industry estimate that there is a 2.5 to 1 ratio of sales to inventory. In spite of the possibilities inherent in the

In absolute terms, as far as the number of outlets goes, bookstores are serving most of these communities better than the public libraries are. Using the listings in the American Book Trade Directory, which we feel to be most complete, we find that bookstores outnumber library outlets in thirty-seven of the forty-three cities. What is necessary to make the picture complete is, of course, a comparison of the relative stock of books (i.e., bookstore inventory and library collection size) of the two sources, but since our only information on bookstore inventory rests on one set of sales figures we feel unprepared to make a comparison at this time.

3. Academic libraries.--After the bookstore, the most important source of books is the libraries in a community's colleges and universities. They serve a narrower segment of the population and more specialized needs than do the public library or the general bookstore.

Our data come from the impressive statistical series issued by the Office of Education,[7] from which we have selected the material to cover our forty-three communities. For each we have the number of colleges, the number of volumes in each of their libraries, and the number of periodicals they received each year. All the college data within each community were combined, and the two indices, outlets and holdings, were constructed as follows: the first is simply the population per academic library, the second is an equally weighted combination of the volumes per library and the number of periodicals per library. This was an attempt to include index of past performance and an index of present commitment to building a collection.

American Booksellers' Association data for analysis along this line, we have to finesse for the moment an attempt to mirror the public library figures of volumes per branch with inventory per store and settle for an order ranking based on sales per capita.

The three rankings by number of people per bookstore were averaged to give a final ranking which we feel maintains the useful features of each statistical source and balances the weaknesses of each against the other. The rank-order correlations of the three measures are shown below:

Census of Business versus American Book Trade Directory	.61
Census of Business versus American Booksellers' Association	.32
American Book Trade Directory versus American Booksellers' Association	.50

[7] U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office of Education. Library Statistics of Colleges and Universities 1962-63, Institutional Data.

Weighting the two equally seemed less offensive than prejudging the relative importance of past and present. This combined index was then averaged (again weighting each equally) with the population per library ranking to give an overall measure of academic library availability. The final ranking is included in Table 3.1; its constituents are shown in Table 3 in Appendix 2.

Not surprisingly, the communities vary considerably in their store of academic books.

4. Special libraries.--Far less visible than public or academic libraries and bookstores are the special and research libraries that serve particular segments of the population. They are included in the inventory because these libraries, surprisingly enough, have almost as many books per capita as do academic libraries.

The source of the data on special libraries is the American Library Directory (23rd ed.). For each of our cities we counted every library listed in the directory which was neither a public nor an academic library. This gave the "number of outlets" parallel to the other kinds of libraries and bookstores. Holdings were not listed as consistently or completely for these libraries compared to the others. We have a volume count for those with 5,000 or more volumes. For those with less than 5,000 volumes, or those with no holdings specified, we estimated holdings to be 2,500. Thus for each city we calculated the familiar measures, "people per outlet" and "volumes per outlet." The cities were ranked separately on each of these measures and the two rankings were then combined for an overall ranking of availability of special library resources. The consolidated ranking appears in Table 3.1, while Table 4 in Appendix 2 shows the data in more detail.

5. Mass distribution paperback books.--This source is by far the greatest single supplier of books to the American reading public, yet there are hardly any statistics on the sale of paperbacks in various communities. We have had to begin from scratch, therefore. With the guidance and cooperation of some members and officials of the Bureau of Independent Publishers and Distributors, the major trade association of paperback distributors, we are in the process of securing the needed information.

The fact that there is only one wholesaler (or possibly two) responsible for the overwhelming proportion of paperback sales in most large cities make our task easier. Each of these major wholesalers knows, or can relatively easily calculate, how many outlets he services, how many titles--new and backlist--he handles, and the total number of books he sells during a given year. We need this information to map the extent of paperback coverage in our communities. Informally, we are told that there is considerable variation in sales per capita and in the density of outlets. With the help assured us from the trade association, we are very likely to receive the quantitative material needed to characterize the pattern of paperbound book availability.

6. Book clubs.--The book club, according to the Bowker Annual of 1960 accounted for more than twice the book sales than did the general trade bookstore.[8] In spite of increasing difficulties in finding and holding members,[9] the book clubs are major suppliers of books to the American reader. The difficulties in securing book club membership data are great, but again, with the cooperation of some of the major book club operations, we are in the process of assembling information that will allow us to rank the forty-three communities in terms of their high or low reliance on book clubs. The method has been to ask the management of some major club or group of clubs to rank each of our communities from best to worst with respect to the number of their book club members per thousand population. So far we have rankings from several smaller book clubs, but there are too few to be included at this point.

7. Used bookstores.--On the advice of several informants in publishing and in the book trade, we have not made any effort to include a quantitative estimate of the availability of used books. The consensus is that this field is relatively small compared to the new book trade, that it appears to a very restricted audience, and that it is a declining business at that. For these reasons we have not attempted to make an overall effort to measure their contribution to the total picture.

8. Direct sales.--This category refers almost entirely to the door-to-door sales of encyclopedias. In dollar figures subscription books comprise about 15 per cent of the total book sales, and most of these sales are made door to door. Though not an inconsiderable part of the book business, we are not including this source

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[8] Wyllis B. Wright (ed.) American Library and Book Trade Annual, 1960 (New York: R. R. Bowker, 1959), pp. 40, 47, 48.

[9] Wall Street Journal, May 13, 1964.

in our quantitative efforts. This is mainly because estimates of the number of salesmen working in a given community appear to us to be too difficult to secure for the limited value this book channel provides.

9. Direct mail from publishers.--We do not know how large this source of books is, either absolutely or relative to the others. The difficulties in estimating its contribution to a community's book supply appear, as with subscription books, greater than the gain we might secure. Therefore, and reluctantly, we have not pursued this source.

10. Private collections.--There are, of course, no statistics on the number of books in individual homes. We will have to rely on survey data like that presented in Chapter 2 for this. That discussion indicated the kinds of error we might expect, and within those boundaries it seems likely that we will be able to characterize the communities by their distribution of personal library sizes. At this point we do not know how much these distributions will vary by city and how these variations relate to the availability of books in the other channels. Nor do we know how private collections are used, that is, how many books are reread by the same person, or other family members, and how many books are loaned to (and returned by) friends. These are important and researchable questions which will be explored in Phase II.

Two points require clarification at this juncture. First, which book sources provide the most books, which the least, to the average book user? Second, what is the interrelationship among the book sources? The answer to the first question can only be given for the four sources we have discussed above--the libraries and the bookstores--the latter being qualified by the use of sales data per capita rather than an actual inventory figure.

The following table shows, then, the average per capita book supply from our known sources.

Now for the intercorrelation of the book sources. Is this situation, at one extreme, "the more the more"? For example, are rich bookstore resources found where libraries are also good? Or, at the other extreme, is the situation that good bookstores are found where libraries are weak? Several important issues require that we be clear about the facts of this issue. Since we have adequate quantitative information on only four sources at the moment, we present in Table 3.3 the rank order correlations between the availability of books in bookstores and public, academic, and special libraries.

TABLE 3.2

AVERAGE BOOKS PER CAPITA FROM LIBRARIES AND BOOKSTORES

(Forty-three cities)

Public libraries	1.30
Academic libraries	.56
Special libraries	.50
Bookstores[a]	.40

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[a] The dollar figures average $1.60 per capita. $1.60/cap = approximately 0.4 books. Cap based on

10 M paperbacks @ $2
and
35 M hard bound @ $5

See: Philip H. Ennis, "The Library Consumer: Patterns and Trends," Library Quarterly, XXXIV, No. 2 (April, 1964), 171. Wright, op. cit., p. 51.

TABLE 3.3

BOOK AVAILABILITY--RANK ORDER CORRELATION

Type of Outlet	Bookstores	Academic Libraries	Special Libraries
Public libraries	.30	.16	.26
Bookstores		.50	.56
Academic libraries . . .			.53

There is the suggestion in these correlations of two somewhat distinct patterns. The correlations between special libraries, academic libraries and bookstores are probably significant and suggestion "the more the more" in the world of purposeful or specialized reading. The low correlations between these outlets and the public library suggests relative independence of the reading resources organized for relatively delimited purposes and those servicing a general reading audience. We will need far more information on the statistical level as well as on the individual level, however, before we can draw any firm conclusions.

Given this patterning among the book channels, the communities can be grouped in two basically different ways. One is to combine the rankings of the separate book sources into a consolidated ranking, yielding a list of cities ranging from best to worst in total book resources.[10] Such a ranking, weighting all sources equally, is given in Table 3.1.

The other way is to characterize each city by the patterning of its book supply. To take the simplest example, we might segregate those cities which have good libraries and poor bookstores from those which have poor libraries and good bookstores, and to complete the logic, separate these from the cities with both good libraries and good bookstores and from the cities which are poor on both. The reasons for this concern with how the various book sources are related stems from our next question.

The Significance of Book Availability Differences

While it is obvious that, generally speaking, the more books there are the more reading there will be, it is not obvious how the combinations of strong and weak book sources will affect the total use of books or their differential use through particular channels. Four bodies of material illustrate the kinds of questions involved and the kind of intensive analysis necessary to answer them.

The first comes from public library circulation figures, which we relate to our measures of public library book availability.

The Office of Education data presenting total library circulation is converted to circulation per capita, ranked for the forty-three cities, and then correlated with the two measures, people per outlet and volumes per outlet. Actually, there are two sets of correlations, one for the cities with higher than average educational attainment for its population, the other for the cities with lower than average educational attainment. This distinction is necessary because book use is not only a function of availability but also of the motivation and skill to use the books. Educational attainment is, as we have seen, an important predictor of these factors. The rank-order correlation between circulation per capita and our consolidated library index for all forty-three cities is .58, that is, as the general level of book availability improves, circulation also rises. The correlations are .57 for the twenty-two cities with higher than average educational levels[11] and .45 for the twenty-one cities with lower than average educational levels. The correlations between book availability and library circulation are relatively the same, indicating that, indeed, book availability does influence use, over and above the educational level of the population.

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[10] The four rankings can be combined in this fashion by weighting each source equally or by giving extra emphasis to these sources which provide more books to the community. Thus we might have a weighting of four points to the public library, three to the bookstores, two for academic libraries, and one point for special libraries. Surprisingly, however, it does not make any difference. The correlation between the consolidated ranking based on an equal weighting and one based on the weights just mentioned is .94.

The second body of evidence relating availability to book use is an old NORC study conducted in 1946 for the American Library Association and reported as part of the Public Library Inquiry. A questionnaire on library use, attitudes toward the library, and reading habits generally were administered to about 200 adults in each of fifteen medium to large cities in the United States.[12]

Using the relevant statistics, we have ranked these cities in terms of their library and bookstore standings, much in the same way as the forty-three cities were ranked. As expected, we found substantial differences in their book availability.[13]

More important, there were definite, though not massive relationships between the statistical assessment of book availability and the individual's reading habits. Because the IBM cards for the study were lost we had only the written reports from each city to go on. These contained only the marginal replies to the questionnaire items; cross-tabulation of the material is thus impossible.[14]

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[11] The forty-three cities were ranked by percentage of high school graduates and the twenty-two highest taken as the high education group. The division point fell at about 40 per cent high school graduates.

[12] See Appendix 4 for the list of the cities.

[13] Library availability varied from .6 to 2.1 volumes per capita and from 4,300 to 72,000 people per branch. Bookstore availability varied from 7,150 to 27,600 people per store, and sales varied from $1.51 to $12.30 annually per capita. (Based on the U.S. Office of Education Bulletin Series, 1947, No. 12; the American Book Trade Directory for 1946; and the 1948 Census of Business.

Notwithstanding all these difficulties, some interesting things do emerge. Consider Table 3.4 which shows how people's interest in reading (as manifested by the mention of reading in the reply to a question asking for favorite ways of spending time) and how the actual amount of time spent reading books varies differentially as a function of book availability.

TABLE 3.4

BOOK AVAILABILITY PATTERNS AND BOOK USE

(NORC, Library Study, 1946)

(Per Cent)

Patterns	High Library Resources		Low Library Resources	
	High Bookstores	Low Bookstores	High Bookstores	Low Bookstores
Interest: preference for reading	36	48	33	36
Reading: hours per week				
None	40	45	48	48
Up to seven hours . . .	38	32	31	31
Seven or more hours . .	22	23	21	21
Total hours . . .	100	100	100	100

There is no clear pattern relating the preference for reading with the availability of books, but there is some definite if slight trend on actual reading. The proportion of heavy readers (those spending over seven hours) does not vary with different availability; there is an increase in the proportion of nonreaders (at the expense of the moderate reader) in the cities where book resources are poorer.

Even more clearly than the amount of reading, Table 3.5 shows the impact of availability on where people get their books.

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[14] We cannot even be certain that such differences in education, age or sex may not be responsible for the results we show. But this is unlikely since we have examined the sample specification sheets for each city and their quotas were substantially the same and were equally filled.

TABLE 3.5

BOOK AVAILABILITY AND THE SOURCES OF BOOKS

(NORC, Library Study, 1946)

(Per Cent)

Patterns	High Library Resources		Low Library Resources	
	High Bookstores	Low Bookstores	High Bookstores	Low Bookstores
Per cent who visited library last year . . .	40	31	27	25
Main source of books:				
Library	35	33	25	25
Bookstore	40	35	49	44
Other	25	32	26	31
Total main source .	100	100	100	100

Both library use and the reliance on the two sources follow predictably from the actual availabilities. The table suggests as well that where libraries are poor the use of bookstores increases but that the reverse is not true--library use does not increase where bookstores are poorly developed. Finally, "other" sources, presumably book clubs and borrowing from friends mainly, increases where the bookstores are worse, but is not affected by poor library resources. These are crude but suggestive materials.

The new NORC Amalgam data are far superior and tells us much more about the impact of book availability on the use of books. The most important information we can present from this survey shows how the basic fourfold tables of early and current reading vary with availability. Table 3.6--drawn from these tables--shows the percentage of readers among those with high education and low education in cities with high, moderate, and low book availability.

TABLE 3.6

BOOK AVAILABILITY AND THE CREATION AND MAINTENANCE OF BOOK READERS

(NORC Amalgam, 1965)

(Per Cent Readers)

Education	Book Availability					
	High		Moderate		Low	
	Early Readers	Current Readers	Early Readers	Current Readers	Early Readers	Current Readers
High school or more	68	76	68	56	67	65
N	(210)		(179)		(142)	
High school or less	52	40	50	32	43	28
N	(120)		(168)		(119)	

First the educational difference in reading patterns is relatively unaffected by the availability variations; people with high school education or better read earlier in life and stay with book reading later as well. Second, the early reading of those with high school education or better is unaffected by differences in availability; their later reading is somewhat affected by availability, but there is a puzzling reversal between the moderate and low availability cities. For those less educated there is a perceptible erosion of early reading as we move from high to low availability and then a strong drift away from current reading, which also follows the availability patterns. In general, this table shows what we had expected. Reading patterns among the less educated are definitely responsive to availability, and the high degree of geographic mobility on the part of the intellectual elite may help to explain why the early reading of the better educated is unaffected by availability patterns. So the only somewhat puzzling finding is the reversal in late reading patterns among the better educated between cities of moderate and low availability.

Table 3.7 presents the data from the basic fourfold tables in a somewhat different fashion. Here the emphasis is on the proportion of early readers and early nonreaders who have become current readers. Once again the group with lower education shows a greater response to book availability: there is a definite trend among the early readers to become current readers in those cities with higher book availability; among the early nonreaders there is a suggestion of a tendency, but the figures are inconclusive. Among the better educated there is also a tendency to respond to local book availability, but once again we have the puzzling reversals that appeared on the previous table.

TABLE 3.7

BOOK AVAILABILITY AND RESPONSE OF EARLY READERS AND EARLY NON-READERS
(NORC Amalgam, 1965)
(Per Cent Current Readers)

Readers	Book Availability					
	High Education			Low Education		
	High	Moderate	Low	High	Moderate	Low
Early readers .	80	60	72	54	46	37
N	(143)	(122)	(95)	(62)	(84)	(51)
Early nonreaders	66	47	52	25	18	21
N	(67)	(57)	(47)	(58)	(84)	(68)

Table 3.8, also drawn from the basic fourfold tables, shows the net percentage gain in readers, the increment of late starters to deserters. Once again education makes a definite difference, and the late starters outnumber the deserters only among the better educated living in areas of high book availability. Book availability has a definite impact on this situation among those with high school education or better, but among the more poorly educated the situation is not at all clear.

TABLE 3.8

NET PERCENTAGE GAIN IN READERS

(NORC Amalgam, 1965)

Education	Book Availability		
	High	Moderate	Low
High school . . .	+ 8	-12	- 2
Less than high school	-12	-18	-15

These are still preliminary findings. We must refine the definitions of availability, take into account more educational gradations, hold constant age levels, and inquire into the degree of spatial mobility. Nevertheless, there is presumptive evidence that differences in book availability influence the long-run shaping of the nature and size of the book audience.

The Amalgam survey allows us a closer look at two of our vital book reading dimensions--the number of books read and their sources. Table 3.9 shows how the distribution of light, moderate, and heavy readers shifts with the total availability of books.

Among the better educated there is a steady decline in the proportion of heavy readers and an increase in the proportion of light readers. If we think now in terms of the composition of the reading public, among the better educated the ratio of heavy to light readers is about two to one in high availability cities; the ratio of light to heavy readers in the low availability cities is almost four to one. (The same general pattern also obtains for the less educated.) The differences in the kinds and numbers of books read in these different availability situations is quite likely to be very different, as is the use of the various book sources. We examined this question by arraying the cities in a different order, dividing them by high and low availability of public library resources and bookstores separately, then combining to make the groupings shown in Table 3.10, along with the survey results to the question as to where readers obtained most of their books.

TABLE 3.9

AMOUNT OF READING AND THE AVAILABILITY OF BOOKS

(NORC Amalgam, 1965)

(Per Cent)

Readers	Book Availability		
	High	Medium	Low
A. Above High School			
Light (1-5 books)	42	46	57
Moderate (6-19 books)	38	36	30
Heavy (20+)	20	18	13
Total	100	100	100
N	(158)	(99)	(93)
B. Less Than High School			
Light (1-5 books)	56	75	67
Moderate (6-19 books)	23	20	21
Heavy (20+)	21	5	12
Total	100	100	100
N	(48)	(55)	(33)

TABLE 3.10

MOST IMPORTANT SOURCES OF BOOKS AND AVAILABILITY

(NORC Amalgam, 1965)

(Per Cent)

Most Important Sources	High Library		Low Library	
	High Book	Low Book	High Book	Low Book
High School Plus				
Public library . .	31	25	18	18
Bookstore	29	30	36	30
Mail	11	18	11	10
Private collection	18	17	27	26
Other	11	10	8	16
N	(97)	(57)	(123)	(61)
Less Than High School				
Public library . .	7	4	13	17
Bookstore	48	37	33	22
Mail	14	7	7	17
Private collection	24	37	36	38
Other	7	15	11	6
N	(29)	(27)	(58)	(18)

There are definite traces of the actual book availabilities on the individudal's acquisition of books. For the better educated, who ordinarily use the public library more than those who did not finish high school, the poorer library resources clearly reduce their importance. Conversely, the less educated, who rely more on the bookstore, are more affected by variations in bookstore availability than the better educated (47 per cent versus 37 per cent, and 35 per cent versus 22 per cent). It is somewhat puzzling why these lower-educated respondents should rely more on the public libraries where they are poorer. Perhaps when age and income are taken into account these differences will become clearer. Too few cases preclude such a refinement at present. Note also the continued heavy use of private collections among the less educated; this dovetails well with their heavy use of bookstores. And finally, note the peculiar variations of book club membership to changes in the other sources.

The significance of these tables is more in their promise than in the strong relationships shown between community book availability and individual reading patterns. That there is some influence seems clear, and this is important The reasons we do not find stronger relationships may be due to our imperfect measures of community book availability. It should be recalled that neither book clubs nor paperback outlets are included in the index. It would be surprising if these outlets made no difference at all. Of more significance is the fact that the city is a very heterogeneous place; some parts of a "high availability" city are book-poor and some parts of a "low availability" city will have plenty of libraries and bookstores. Some measure of what we might call micro-availability is obviously needed to characterize the individual's actual objective availability situation and also, his subjective sense of how difficult or easy it is to get a book. The design of the larger study will be very much concerned with affording an opportunity to measure all of these levels of book availability.

The fourth set of consequences of differential book availability are those that shape the community's global reading characteristics, especially those that bring the community into the mainstream of the national literary flow or isolate it from those tides that periodically bring forward a new set of best-selling books.

A glance at the list of best sellers in Chicago or New Orleans, for example, will show that once or twice a year a few books are produced that will have wide local appeal but will not sell well elsewhere.

It is equally likely that other cities will mirror (or shadow) the national best sellers only. Cities do vary, in short, in the extent to which they follow the national taste in current reading (and most likely in all reading as well).

This is a difficult and complex question, but one of great import for the understanding of how cultural products, be they books, drama, music, or the visual arts, are disseminated through the society. With new nationally-circulated book reviewer publications appearing on the scene at present, the problem invites investigation even more urgently.

As a beginning we have provisional access to the list of best-selling books assembled by Publishers Weekly from some fifty or more cities each month. We will propose in the larger study to explore the ways in which these cities are similar or different in the books that are best sellers during a given extended period of time, and most important, how these differences or similarities are related to the book availability patterns in these cities.

Accounting for Book Availability Patterns

It has not been in the center of our efforts, but throughout the project persistent questions arose as to why cities varied in library or bookstore availability, whey they had such different attitudes toward their libraries and used them to such varied extents, and why some cities had peculiarly rich stores of books from all sources, or were relatively bare of books all down the line. There has been no time to explore this question during the course of this pilot study. Even the few rank order correlations we have completed are skeptically presented. Limitations of our analytic apparatus preclude pressing the question. Too many independent variables are involved, and the dependent variable (availability) has too many empirical indices to be domesticated by the crudity of the rank order correlational method.

Previous research efforts by the principal investigator have familiarized the staff with some of the problems of this kind of investigation. The proposal for the larger study includes the approach which we feel is most productive.

Finally, with respect to availability, we refer to the previous suggestion that for some purposes neither previously gathered statistics, nor the ordinary respondent to a survey could capture some of the nuances of book availability that might turn out to be the critical ones in keeping people closely in touch with books and stimulating new readers along the way.

The reasons we think this might be the case rest in part on the qualitative interviews. The dissatisfactions--in fact, the entire set of attitudes toward public libraries and bookstores--rested on a set of very personal, almost idiosyncratic experiences with these institutions, whether in early or in adult life, which appeared to have marked impact on the current use and opinion about them.

What we propose, therefore, is a controlled, standardized, and self-conscious approximation of these experiences applied to all book facilities in the communities we select for study. In brief, we propose a research team for each community that will carry out a field test of book availability involving bookstores, public libraries, and all the other major outlets of books. It will involve assessing the depth and diversity of the city's book stock; it will involve testing the courtesy and service orientation of the city's book personnel, both in bookstores and in libraries. And with respect to this latter point it will involve a test of the book personnel's response to such important segments of the population as the high school student (both the assignment-directed and the purely self-motivating reader), the culturally deprived, and the independent thinker and reader pursuing his interests without benefit of institutional affiliation with unversity or industry. The details of these tests will be included in the proposal itself.

APPENDIX 1

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QUESTIONNAIRE WORDINGS IN SURVEYS USED

NORC Adult Education Study, 1962

Which do you read most often--newspapers, magazines or books?

Newspapers . . . .
Magazines . . . .
Books . . . .
All equally . . . .
Never read anything . . . . . .
Don't know . . . .

About how many books have you read in the past year?

Number of books ____________
Don't know . . . .

NORC Adult Sample, 1963

Do you read any magazines regularly?

Yes . . . .
No . . . .

Have you read a book in the past six months?

Yes . . . .
No . . . .

NORC College Graduate Survey, 1964

How often do you do each of the following? (Circle one in each row.)

	Frequently	Occasionally	Seldom or Rarely	Never
Read (not necessarily finish) a non-fiction book	1	2	3	4
Read (not necessarily finish) a work of "serious" fiction	6	7	8	9
Read poetry	1	2	3	4
Listen to classical or serious music	6	7	8	9
Listen to popular music	1	2	3	4
Listen to jazz	6	7	8	9
Watch television	1	2	3	4
Read a newspaper	6	7	8	9

About how many books do you own, counting paperbacks?

	Under 50	50-74	75-79	100-149	150-199	200-249	250-299	300-349	350-499	500-999	1,000 and over
(Circle one)	X	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

(Females only)
For each of the periods of your life indicated below, circle the activities you very much enjoy(ed). (Circle as many as apply in each column.)

	Periods of Your Life			
Activities:	A. Last Years in Elementary School	B. High School Years	C. College Years	D. Now
Active sports	X	X	X	X
Being with female friends	0	0	0	0
Being with male friends	1	1	1	1
Solitary activities (walking, day-dreaming, solo hobbies)	2	2	2	2
Planning, organizing things . . .	3	3	3	3
Sewing, other needlework	4	4	4	4
Cooking	5	5	5	5
Visiting relatives	6	6	6	6
Music and art	7	7	7	7
Being with young children	8	8	8	8
Serious reading or study	9	9	9	9

NORC Amalgam, 1965

12. Have you read any book, either hard cover or paperback, within the past six months? (If you've started but not finished a book, that counts too.)

Yes . . . . (ASK A-D)	1	38/0
No . . . . (SKIP TO Q. 13) .	2	

IF YES:

A. How many books have you read?

One	1	39/0
Two-Five	2	
Six-Ten	3	
Eleven-Twenty	4	
Twenty-one or more	5	

B. Where did you get the book(s) you read? CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY BUT DO NOT READ CATEGORIES TO RESPONDENT.

Public library	1	40/0
Other libraries	2	
Book or other store	3	
Book Club, mail	4	
Borrowed from friends or relatives	5	
Gift from friends or relatives	6	
Own collection	7	
Other (SPECIFY) ______________________	8	

C. Where do you obtain most of the books you read? CIRCLE ONLY ONE BUT DO NOT READ CATEGORIES TO RESPONDENT.

Public library	1	41/0
Other libraries	2	
Book or other store	3	
Book Club, mail	4	
Borrowed from friends or relatives	5	
Gift from friends or relatives	6	
Own collection	7	
Other (SPECIFY) ______________________	8	

D. I will mention some different types of books. Please tell me for each whether you now read that type of book frequently, occasionally, or hardly ever.

	Frequently	Occasionally	Hardly Ever	Never	
Fiction-classic or current	1	2	3	4	42/0
Mysteries, westerns, science fiction, humor	6	7	8	9	43/5
Social science, business, politics	1	2	3	4	44/0
Plays, poetry, art, music	6	7	8	9	45/5
Science or technology	1	2	3	4	46/0
Histories or biographies	6	7	8	9	47/5
Religious books other than Bible	1	2	3	4	48/0
Books connected with your work	6	7	8	9	49/5
Books on health or family care	1	2	3	4	50/0
Self-improvement books	6	7	8	9	51/5
Hobbies, sports, gardening, cookbooks, home repair, home decoration, travel	1	2	3	4	52/0
Any other kind of book (SPECIFY)	6	7	8	9	53/5

NORC Amalgam, 1965 (Continued)

13. Thinking back, was there any time in your life when you read a great many books--not counting those required by school or a job?

Yes . . . . . . (ASK A)	1
No	2

IF YES:

A. When was that? RECORD VERBATIM AND PROBE IN ORDER TO CIRCLE PROPER CODE OR CODES.

Always, since childhood	4
Before high school	5
During high school	6
During college.	7
After formal schooling	8
Other (SPECIFY) ______________________	9

NORC Methodological Study, 1965

1. About how many times during an average week do you read or glance at a daily newspaper?

____

2. Do you read any magazines regularly at the present time?

No ___ Yes ___ (Please list):

______________ | ______________
______________ | ______________
______________ | ______________

3. Have you read any book, hard cover or paperback, within the past six months? If you've started but not finished a book, that counts too.

No ___ Yes ___

A. How many books have you read?

1 ___ 2-5 ___ 6-10 ___ 11-20 ___ More than 20 ___

Could you list as many of the titles or authors as you can remember. (Identify the types of books for those you cannot recall specifically, for example, "five detective stories.")

______________ | ______________
______________ | ______________
______________ | ______________
______________ | ______________
______________ | ______________
______________ | ______________

B. Where do you now get most of the books you read? (Check only one of the following):

Public library ___
Other libraries ___
Book or other store ___
Book club, mail ___
Borrowed from friends or relatives ___
Gifts from friends or relatives ___
Own collection ___
Other ______________ ___
(Please specify)

4. About how many books do you own, counting paperbacks?

Under 50	50-74	75-99	100-149	150-199	200-249	250-299	300-349	350-499	500-999	1,000 or over

NORC Methodological Study, 1965 (Continued)

5. For each of the periods of your life indicated below, check the box which best described your book reading habits and interests. (Leave blank those columns that don't apply to you.)

	Elementary school	High school	College	The first few years after finishing school	Now
I liked to read and I read a lot.					
I liked to read but I didn't read very much					
I wasn't very interested in reading but I read a lot anyway.					
I wasn't very interested in reading and I didn't read very much.					

6. Compared to five years ago, do you now read more books, fewer books, or about the same number?

More _______ Fewer _______ About the same _______

Now a few questions about yourself for statistical purposes.

Age _______ Sex _______ Marital Status _______ Religious preference _______

What is your job at present? _______________________

Could you check the appropriate box to indicate the educational attainment of your father, your mother and yourself and your spouse (if applicable).

	Father	Mother	Yourself	Your spouse
Completed elementary school				
Some high school				
Completed high school				
Some college				
Completed college				
Postgraduate work, with or without advanced degrees				

Your name: _______________________

Address: _______________________

Telephone: _______________________

NORC Methodological Study, 1965 (Continued)

During the next few days you will probably recall reading some books you didn't list on the first page. So, would you please take this sheet home with you and during the coming week list all the books you have read but forgot to list. Looking at your book shelf and talking about your reading with family and friends will help you remember. We are trying to see how many and what kind of books tend to be forgotten.

Could you also look around your home and estimate as accurately as possible the number of books you own? We are also trying to see how well people can guess the number of their books.

Under 50	50-74	75-99	100-149	150-199	200-249	250-299	300-349	350-499	500-999	1,000 or over

Please return this sheet one week from today in the addressed envelope provided.

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

APPENDIX 2

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TABLE 1

LIBRARIES

City	Population	People Outlet	People Per Outlet Rank	Volumes/ Outlet	Volumes/ Outlet Rank	Consolidated Index
New York	7,781,984	38,910	30	53,022	17	27.5
Chicago.	3,550,404	55,475	39	39,392	23	39.5
Los Angeles.	2,479,015	43,491	32	46,912	20	31.5
Philadelphia	2,002,512	47,679	35	48,362	19	33
Detroit.	1,670,144	55,671	40	62,172	10	29.5
Baltimore.	939,024	33,537	27	58,055	14	19.5
Houston.	938,219	52,123	38	27,575	37	43
Cleveland.	876,050	23,054	11	78,216	2	1
Minneapolis-St. Paul . .	826,283	28,493	18	53,476	16	9
Washington	763,956	38,198	29	57,021	15	21.5
St. Louis.	750,026	28,847	19	68,356	5	4
Milwaukee[1]	741,324	41,687	31	64,157	8	17
San Francisco[1].	740,316	26,531	16	29,932	31	27.5
Boston	697,197	23,240	12	72,073	4	2
Pittsburgh	604,332	27,470	17	67,029	6	3
Seattle.	557,087	30,949	21	60,459	12	6.5
Buffalo[1]	532,726	18,679	5	32,592	30	12
Memphis[1]	497,524	44,604	34	40,578	22	35
Atlanta[1]	487,455	31,456	23	29,919	32	34
Indianapolis	476,258	23,813	13	36,268	25	15
Phoenix.	439,170	87,834	42	48,781	18	37.5
Newark	405,220	31,171	22	62,707	9	5

[1] Serves more than city population:

Milwaukee	958,811
San Francisco . . .	742,855
Buffalo	532,726
Memphis	624,451
Atlanta	597,658

TABLE 1--Continued

City	Population	People Outlet	People Per Outlet Rank	Volumes/ Outlet	Volumes/ Outlet Rank	Consoli- dated Index
Fort Worth[1]	356,268	107,453	43	75,688	3	25.5
Birmingham[1]	340,887	33,414	26	28,985	34	37.5
Akron[1]	290,351	24,011	14	27,216	38	31.5
Gary-Hammond[1]	290,018	13,583	1	24,892	39	18
Paterson-Clifton-Passaic	279,710	18,647	4	24,892	40	21.5
Tampa.	274,970	24,997	15	13,285	43	36
San Jose	204,196	34,033	28	28,782	35	41
Charlotte[1]	201,564	18,141	3	19,656	42	24
Jacksonville	201,030	22,337	10	37,313	24	9
Salt Lake City	189,454	31,576	24	60,963	11	12
Duluth-Superior[1]	140,447	20,816	7	33,771	28	12
Amarillo	137,969	68,985	41	42,626	21	39.5
South Bend	132,445	22,074	9	32,616	29	15
Albany	129,726	21,621	8	29,091	33	19.5
Middletown-Hamilton[1] . .	114,469	20,286	6	34,827	27	6.5
Waterbury.	107,130	17,855	2	27,588	36	15
Utica.	100,410	50,205	36	64,407	7	23
Waco	97,808	32,603	25	23,597	41	42
Manchester	88,282	44,141	33	82,486	1	9
Bakersfield[1]	56,848	29,198	20	35,822	26	25.5
Tyler.	51,230	51,220	37	58,450	13	29.5

---

[1] Serves more than city population:

Fort Worth	537,263
Birmingham	634,864
Akron	408,179
Gary-Hammond.	298,828
Charlotte.	272,111
Duluth-Superior.	166,530
Middletown-Hamilton. . . .	162,284
Bakersfield.	291,984

TABLE 2a

BOOKSTORES

City	American Booksellers Association 1,000's People/ Outlet	Rank	Census of Business 1,000's of People/ Outlet	Rank	American Book Trade Directory 1,000's of People/ Outlet	Rank
New York	56	24	5.8	2	9.0	6
Chicago.	93	36.5	11.6	10	14.4	20
Los Angeles.	58	26	10.2	7	6.4	17
Philadelphia	54	20.5	12.7	12	15.8	22
Detroit.	93	36.5	19.6	28.5	22.0	37
Baltimore.	55	22.5	17.4	24.5	17.1	28
Houston.	59	27	25.4	35	26.1	41
Cleveland.	67	29	24.3	34	17.2	29.5
Minneapolis-St. Paul . .	52	19	14.5	18	10.5	8
Washington	23	3	12.3	11	8.0	2
St. Louis.	47	17	17.4	24.5	16.0	24
Milwaukee.	44	15.5	20.0	30	20.0	33
San Francisco.	31	8	6.6	3	6.4	1
Boston	30	7	5.3	1	8.8	5
Pittsburgh	55	22.5	14.7	19	11.4	10
Seattle.	35	11	15.9	21	9.3	7
Buffalo.	89	34	16.1	22	14.0	19
Memphis.	166	43	31.1	38	24.9	40
Atlanta.	37	12	19.5	27	13.9	18
Indianapolis	79	33	19.1	26	15.9	23
Phoenix.	63	28	20.9	33	16.9	27
Newark	101	40	7.8	4	16.2	25
Fort Worth	71	31	13.2	14	15.5	21
Birmingham	57	25	34.1	41	22.7	38
Akron.	73	32	58.1	43	19.4	32
Gary-Hammond	97	38	32.2	39	48.3	43
Paterson-Clifton-Passaic	140	41.5	9.3	5	21.5	36
Tampa.	92	35	19.6	28.5	30.5	42
San Jose	34	10	15.7	20	12.8	14
Charlotte.	40	13.5	10.6	8	18.3	31
Jacksonville	40	13.5	16.8	23	13.4	16
Salt Lake City	32	9	13.5	15	12.6	12
Duluth-Superior.	140	41.5	20.1	31.5	12.8	14
Amarillo	69	30	13.8	16	17.2	29.5
South Bend	44	15.5	26.5	36	16.6	26
Albany	22	2	10.0	6	8.6	4
Middletown-Hamilton. . .	14	1	57.2	42	22.9	39
Waterbury.	54	20.5	26.8	37	21.4	35
Utica.	50	18	20.1	31.5	20.1	34
Waco	98	39	32.6	40	12.2	11
Manchester	29	5.5	11.0	9	11.0	9
Bakersfield.	29	5.5	14.2	17	8.1	3
Tyler.	26	4	12.8	13	12.8	14

TABLE 2b

BOOKSTORES

City	Combined Rank People/ Outlet	American Booksellers Association Bookstores Sales/ Cap	Rank	Consolidated Index
New York	8	2.19	10	7.5
Chicago	21	2.31	9	13
Los Angeles	13	1.43	23	20
Philadelphia	17	1.76	16	16
Detroit	37	.96	31	35
Baltimore	23.5	2.14	11	10
Houston	38	.91	32	36.5
Cleveland	35.5	1.65	21	29.5
Minneapolis-St. Paul	12	1.67	19	15
Washington	4	4.35	4	3
St. Louis	19	1.60	22	21.5
Milwaukee	27	1.93	14	21.5
San Francisco	1.5	4.93	2	1
Boston	3	4.52	3	2
Pittsburgh	14	2.35	7.5	9
Seattle	10	2.65	6	6
Buffalo	23.5	.89	33	29.5
Memphis	43	.43	38.5	42
Atlanta	18	1.72	17	18
Indianapolis	28.5	.71	35	32
Phoenix	33	.67	37	36.5
Newark	22	.74	34	27.5
Fort Worth	20	1.21	25	24
Birmingham	39	1.05	26	34
Akron	41	1.97	13	25.5
Gary-Hammond	42	.37	40	43
Paterson-Clifton-Passaic	30	.07	43	39.5
Tampa	40	1.22	24	33
San Jose	11	1.71	18	11
Charlotte	15.5	1.85	15	14
Jacksonville	15.5	1.66	20	19
Salt Lake City	9	3.31	5	5
Duluth-Superior	32	.13	41	39.5
Amarillo	25	.98	29	24.5
South Bend	26	.97	30	27.5
Albany	1.5	2.35	7.5	4
Middletown-Hamilton	28.5	9.14	1	12
Waterbury	35.5	.70	36	38
Utica	31	1.00	28	31
Waco	34	.10	42	41
Manchester	5	.43	38.5	23
Bakersfield	6	2.12	12	7.5
Tyler	7	1.04	27	17

TABLE 3

ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

City	Volume/ Outlet (1,000's)	Rank	Period- icals/ Outlet	Rank	Consoli- dated Holdings Rank	People/ Library (1,000's)	Rank	Consoli- dated Index
New York	206.8	6	1,022	11	6	176.9	32	19.5
Chicago	119.7	19	120	34	25.5	104.4	19	28
Los Angeles	200.8	7	2,139	3	3	137.7	27	10
Philadelphia	123.1	27	765	28	28	52.7	6	15.5
Detroit	104.0	20	846	15	18	139.2	29	29
Baltimore	136.4	14	1,000	13	14	78.3	14	9
Houston	144.3	12	1,186	7	8.5	156.3	31	22
Cleveland	131.1	16	815	17	17	97.3	18	17.5
Minneapolis-St. Paul	164.5	9	1,007	12	11	48.6	3	3
Washington	136.2	15	847	14	15	50.9	5	6
St. Louis	145.6	11	1,158	9	10	62.5	9	5
Milwaukee	55.9	25	602	22	23	67.4	11	15.5
San Francisco	90.8	22	828	16	20	82.2	15	17.5
Boston	103.4	21	713	19	21	46.5	2	7
Pittsburgh	170.5	8	1,464	4	4	54.9	7	1.5
Seattle	342.0	3	4,514	2	2	139.3	30	13
Buffalo	48.6	28	372	25	25.5	76.1	13	21
Memphis	54.0	18	305	18	19	71.1	12	11.5
Atlanta	318.8	4	319	27	16	121.8	24	23.5
Indianapolis	72.5	23	73	35	30	119.0	23	31
Phoenix	25.5	34	347	26	31	219.5	34	35
Newark	-	39.5	-	39.5	39.5	-	39.5	39.5
Fort Worth	258.0	5	1,072	10	5	118.7	22	8
Birmingham	54.7	26	291	29	28	113.6	21	30
Akron	137.0	13	1,246	6	8.5	290.3	35	26.5
Gary-Hammond	-	39.5	-	39.5	39.5	-	39.5	39.5
Paterson-Clifton-Passaic	-	39.5	-	39.5	39.5	-	39.5	39.5
Tampa	37.0	31	383	24	28	137.5	26	32
San Jose	130.0	17	1,302	5	12	102.0	19	11.5
Charlotte	36.7	32	278	31	33.5	67.3	10	26.5
Jacksonville	67.0	24	692	21	22	201.0	33	33
Salt Lake City	667.5	1	5,794	1	1	94.5	17	4
Duluth-Superior	-	39.5	-	39.5	39.5	-	39.5	39.5
Amarillo	20.0	35	151	33	35	138.0	28	34
South Bend	578.0	2	578	23	13	132.4	25	19.5
Albany	39.5	29	261	32	32	32.5	1	14
Middletown-Hamilton	-	39.5	-	39.5	39.5	-	39.5	39.5
Waterbury	-	39.5	-	39.5	39.5	-	39.5	39.5
Utica	-	39.5	-	39.5	39.5	-	39.5	39.5
Waco	164.0	10	1,173	8	7	49.0	4	1.5
Manchester	39.0	30	694	20	24	88.3	16	22.5
Bakersfield	28.0	33	287	30	33.5	56.8	8	25
Tyler	-	39.5	-	39.5	39.5	-	39.5	39.5

TABLE 4

SPECIAL LIBRARIES

City	People/ Library (1,000's)	Rank	Volumes/ Library (1,000's)	Rank	Consolidated Index
New York	11.3	5	16.70	11	5
Chicago	18.7	13	29.97	4	6.5
Los Angeles	28.8	29	13.74	17	21
Philadelphia	15.9	12	31.70	3	4
Detroit	31.5	32	9.74	27	29
Baltimore	19.2	14	18.67	7	10
Houston	24.7	24	7.18	34	28
Cleveland	10.6	4	10.51	23	15
Minneapolis-St. Paul	14.2	9	17.69	8	6.5
Washington	3.1	1	166.13	1	1
St. Louis	15.3	11	17.14	10	10
Milwaukee	32.2	33	7.17	35	37
San Francisco	7.5	2	15.98	12	3
Boston	8.6	3	28.95	5	2
Pittsburgh	11.6	6	14.48	16	12.5
Seattle	25.3	25	17.36	9	14
Buffalo	21.3	19	9.72	28	23.5
Memphis	55.3	39	11.78	21	30
Atlanta	20.3	17	15.04	14	17
Indianapolis	12.9	7	11.49	22	16
Phoenix	36.6	35	8.58	30	35
Newark	22.5	21	10.17	26	23.5
Fort Worth	29.7	31	15.00	15	21
Birmingham	28.4	27	6.33	36	32.5
Akron	32.3	34	8.67	29	32.5
Gary-Hammond	72.5	41	3.25	40	41.5
Paterson-Clifton-Passaic	56.0	40	3.00	41	41.5
Tampa	55.0	42	10.20	25	36
San Jose	29.1	30	5.71	39	38.5
Charlotte	40.4	36	7.80	33	38.5
Jacksonville	28.7	28	13.57	18	21
Salt Lake City	21.0	18	146.44	2	8
Duluth-Superior	23.3	23	11.83	20	19
Amarillo	27.6	26	6.00	37.5	34
South Bend	22.0	20	8.50	31	26
Albany	13.0	8	15.70	13	10
Middletown-Hamilton	22.8	22	8.00	32	27
Waterbury	53.5	38	10.50	24	3
Utica	20.0	16	19.20	6	12.5
Waco	19.6	15	12.80	19	18
Manchester	44.1	37	2.50	42	40
Bakersfield	14.3	10	6.00	37.5	25
Tyler	-	43	0	43	43

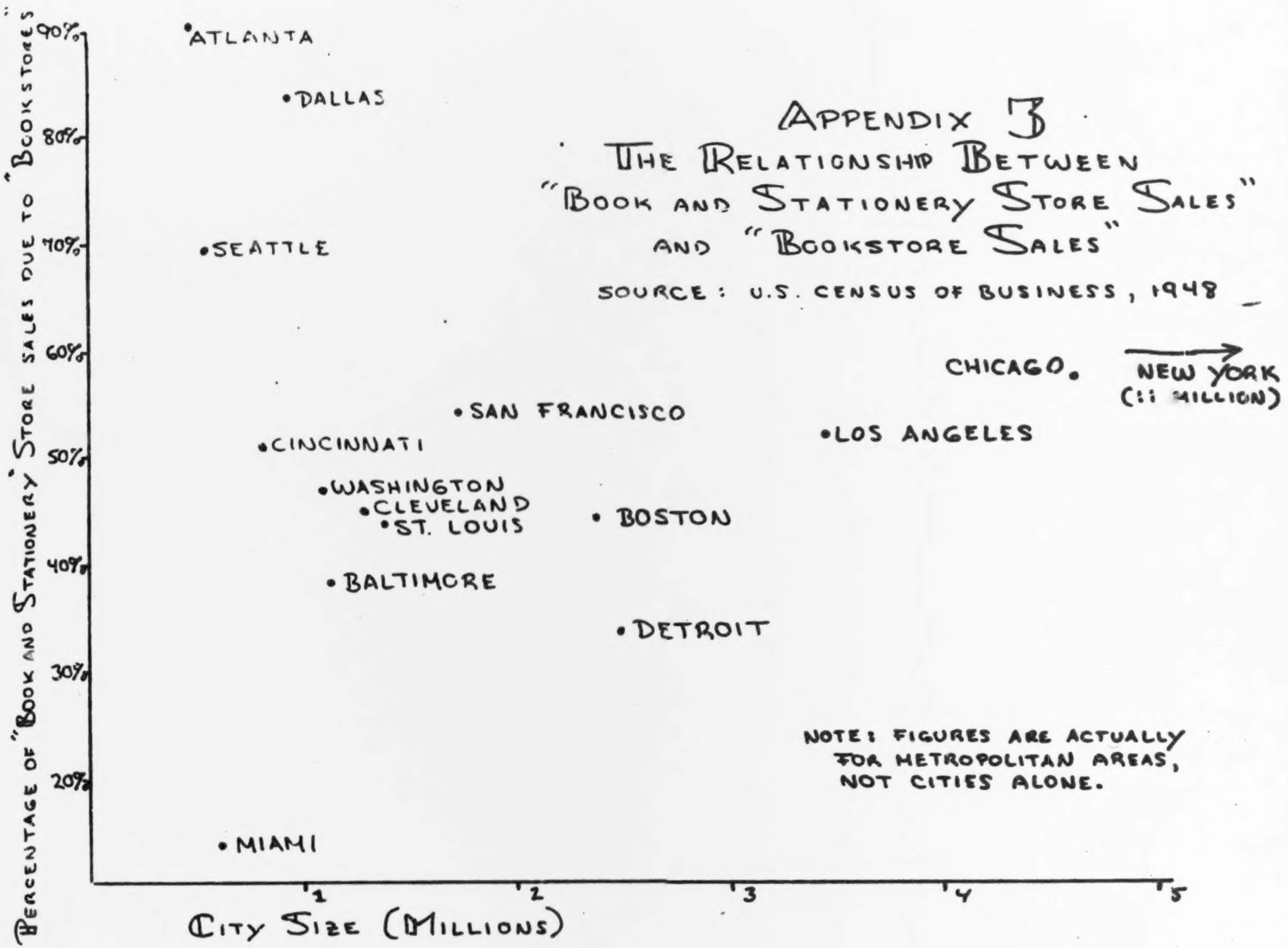
APPENDIX 3

PRECEDING PAGE BLANK-NOT FILMED

APPENDIX B

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN "BOOK AND STATIONERY STORE SALES" AND "BOOKSTORE SALES"

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS OF BUSINESS, 1948



NOTE: FIGURES ARE ACTUALLY FOR METROPOLITAN AREAS, NOT CITIES ALONE.

APPENDIX 4

PRECEDING PAGE BLANK-NOT FILMED

CITIES INVOLVED IN THE NORC 1946 LIBRARY STUDY

Baltimore

Buffalo

Chicago

Detroit

Hartford

Houston

Kansas City, Mo.

Louisville

Milwaukee

Newark

Philadelphia

Pittsburgh

Portland

St. Louis

Seattle